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BISHOP COLENSO'S
OBJECTIONS
TO THE
HISTORICAL CHARACTER OF THE
PENTATEUCH.
AND
THE BOOK OF JOSHUA.

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BISHOP COLENZO'S
OBJECTIONS
TO THE
HISTORICAL CHARACTER OF THE
PENTATEUCH
AND
THE BOOK OF JOSHUA

(CONTAINED IN PART I.)

C R I T I C A L L Y E X A M I N E D

By Dr. A. BENISCH,

TRANSLATOR OF THE "JEWISH SCHOOL AND FAMILY BIBLE."

"Remember ye the law of Moses, my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel with the statutes and judgments."—*Malachi*, iv. 4.

"Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me. . . .

"Keep, therefore, and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people."—*Deuteronomy*, iv. 5—6.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE following examination of Bishop Colenso's objections to the historical character of the Pentateuch, as contained in Part I, originally appeared in a series of articles in the Jewish Chronicle. The first was published on November 28, 1862, and the last on February 27, 1863. They were intended to quiet the minds of such of the author's co-religionists as had been unsettled by the Bishop's arguments—the book having created as much sensation in the Jewish community as among other denominations. But, so general was the approbation with which these replies were received among his brethren in faith, and so warm the wish for their publication in a separate volume, that, in compliance with this call, he re-cast them, and now presents them to the public as an independent work. This origin of the publication will account for the rare appeal of the author to any other authority in support of his arguments, beyond that of the text of the Bible itself. Appeals to authorities not accessible to the mass of his co-religionists would not have strengthened the impressions which he wished to produce. He had, moreover, another reason for not resorting to ancient translations and commentaries in the task undertaken by him. The author believes, that while such versions of the Bible as the Septuagint or Targumim were produced at periods when the vital principle animating a living language and rendering, by a natural instinct, all artificial help unnecessary, was quite extinct, their execution was yet not near enough the time when sound philology and profound criticism, to some extent, supplied the place of the missing resource referred to. In point of authority,

therefore, he attaches more importance to translations and interpretations proceeding from acknowledged scholars of his own days, than to those composed after Hebrew had ceased to be the vernacular of the people. Neither has he referred to the rabbis in support of his statements, where he could have done so, although he is convinced that, upon the whole, a correct traditional knowledge of the Hebrew and interpretation of the Bible was preserved among them, because he believed that such an appeal would be little calculated to satisfy doubts in minds predisposed to scepticism.

The author has further to remark, that the translation of the texts upon which he comments is his own, which appeared some years ago, under the title of a “Jewish School and Family Bible,” and was executed under the supervision of the Rev. the Chief Rabbi.

The first article on the subject, which appeared on 28th November last, having only been introductory to the series, the author now reproduces as much thereof as he deems useful for his purpose. Some abruptness in its style will be easily accounted for by the omission of some portions, which would be quite unnecessary in the new form of his replies.

EXTRACTS FROM THE FIRST ARTICLE.

The sensation created by this work is solely due to the circumstance, that it is an Anglican Bishop who is the assailant; that the work so quickly follows the publication of “Essays and Reviews,” and that the objections, being free from all technical terms and learned words, abstruse lore, and philological discussion, are expressed in popular language, refer to the simplest arithmetical calculations, and are thus placed within the reach of ordinary capacities.

But, although we deny either the novelty or difficulty of the objections propounded by the Bishop, we acknowledge his rare courage, do homage to his extraordinary candour, and

cheerfully pay our tribute of respect due to the uncommon degree of disinterestedness evinced by him in his statements. Instead of beating about the bush, and employing vague and general terms, leaving open a back-door for retreat in case of danger, the Bishop boldly throws down the gauntlet, and, in plain language — almost of mathematical precision — tells us what he thinks of the Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua. Like Cortez, who, by burning the vessel that conveyed him to the country to be conquered, derived courage from the very impossibility of escape, so has Dr. Colenso, in the very introduction to his work, cut himself off from all chance of retreat. He is determined to conquer or fall. He there openly states that the Pentateuch is unhistorical as a whole, not written by Moses, and, consequently, that it is not an inspired work in the common sense of the term. Now, it is not our object to discuss either the subject of inspiration, the authorship of the Pentateuch, or its historical character. These are broad questions, which, from their nature, hardly admit of popular treatment. The examination of the external and internal evidence which these questions involve, requires an amount of historical and philological knowledge in the widest sense of the word, and a degree of critical tact which but few possess. But what we will endeavour to prove is, that, so far as Bishop Colenso's objections are concerned, these questions are precisely in the position in which they were before the Doctor's work appeared, the attack admitting of a successful defence; and that, if the known arguments were deemed sufficient, before the publication of this work, to settle these questions one way or another, they have lost nothing in cogency by the book now before the public. In other words, we want to show that Bishop Colenso has not added any strength to the arguments of the rationalists, nor in any way diminished the weight of the reasons always advanced by believers.

Our belief in the authenticity of the Pentateuch, the same as of all other books of the Bible, does not depend exclusively

upon the belief, that they were necessarily, such as we possess them, written by the authors to whom they are commonly attributed, but upon our belief that their form and contents are the same as they were in the time of Ezra and his companions or successors, among whom there were prophets inspired by God, and who, before the conclusion of the canon, examined the sacred compositions which form the Bible, purged them from every spurious element, and only allowed such historical explanations or references to remain as they knew were authentic and deemed useful. They then gave the work the sanction of their authority, considered by the Jews as divine.

But, then, the question arises:—How is it that such a man as Dr. Colenso, learned, disinterested, and earnestly searching after truth, should jump at the conclusion that the Pentateuch is unhistorical, “that with respect to some, at least, of the chief contents of the story, it cannot be regarded as historically true,” when at the very utmost the difficulties started by him warrant the inference that there are found in the books “critically examined” by him several transpositions, various interpolations, and occasional omissions of details, no doubt at the time well known, but the preservation of which for posterity was deemed unnecessary by the sacred writer, and, therefore, either not at all or only incidentally referred to? The attentive readers of his work will find no difficulty in discovering the key to this lock. The mistakes of the critic of the Pentateuch arise—

In the first place, from his implicit reliance on the Anglican version. Whatever the excellencies of this version, fidelity in the renderings from the Hebrew is not one of them. There is a looseness about these renderings, which, as we shall show further on, not rarely misleads the critic. The Doctor should either have more carefully examined the original text of the passages commented upon, or made use of some translation that faithfully reflects the Hebrew.

Secondly, from the Doctor's peculiar cast of mind. The Doctor is evidently deficient in the power of divesting himself for the time of his modern western notions and mode of viewing things, and adapting himself to the eastern mind and fashion, such as they were at the period and in the country of the writer of the Pentateuch. The Doctor's mind is clearly deficient in poetical apprehension. Long study of mathematics and the severe logic of exact science, to which the course of his thoughts has become habituated, have fixed his mind on the strict letter and logical sequence of ideas, and have, in this respect, narrowed it. Accustomed to employ no terms except those of which he was prepared to give a clear definition, such as is approved of in science, he applies the same standard to persons to whom such habits of thoughts and trains of ideas were strangers.

Thirdly, from a singular moral sense, over-refined to morbidity, which disables him from taking a proper view of the state of society such as it existed in the age and the country of the Jewish lawgiver. It is to the combination of these defects, joined to an ardent love of truth, urging him to proclaim what he considers to be the truth, that we must ascribe the work which we intend to examine. We shall, for this purpose, irrespective of the order of the book, and in order to economise space, distribute its contents into four groups. In the first, we comprehend all those erroneous statements which arose from the Bishop's misunderstanding² of the original text which, for the sake of brevity, we will call philological; to the second belong those depending upon the geographical features of the desert; to the third, those made³ on arithmetical; and to the fourth, objections raised on moral grounds — each group being considered separately.

We shall, in our references to them, designate the first (Philological) group by the initials P. G.; the second (Geographical), G. G.; the third (Arithmetical), A. G.; and the fourth (Moral), M. G.

A CRITICAL EXAMINATION, ETC.

I.

GROUP OF PHILOLOGICAL OBJECTIONS.

1.—INSTITUTION OF THE PASSOVER (Chap. x.)

1. BISHOP COLENSO, quoting Exod. xii. 21—28, takes it for granted, that all the acts enumerated there were to be performed on one single day, and that, too, the very day on which the Israelites actually went out from Egypt; and then he inquires, supposing even that the elders of the people “lived somewhere near at hand, Where did the millions live? And how could the order to keep the Passover have been conveyed, with its minutest particulars, to each *individual* household in this vast community in one day — rather *twelve hours* — since Moses received the command on the very same day on which they were to kill the Passover at eve; Ex. xii. 6?”

2. But where is it said, that the command concerning the Passover was given on the 14th day of the first month? Certainly not in the sacred text. Therein we read (xii. 2, 3): “And the Eternal spake to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying: This month shall be to you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak ye to all the congregation of Israel, saying: In the *tenth* day of this month they shall take to them every man one of a flock for the house of their fathers.” From this, it is clear

that the command must have been given to Moses some time between the first and the ninth of the month. Whichever day it was, there was abundant time for the elders (ver. 21) to convey the order to the people, which, as is known to every Biblical scholar, formed an organised body, presided over by the heads of the families, and these again by the princes of the tribes. If it is, moreover, considered that previous events must have prepared them for the final issue of this struggle, it is but natural to suppose that special arrangements had been made before-hand to meet such an emergency.

3. But, objects the Bishop, Is it not said (v. 12): “I will pass through the land of Egypt *this night* (בְּלִילָה הַזֹּה) and will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt,” and not בְּלִילָה הַחַזְאָה (that night)? Further does the expression “about midnight” (xi. 4) not clearly refer to the midnight, “then next at hand,” *i.e.*, the very midnight on which the last of the ten plagues took place?

4. Here the Bishop has overlooked that our English “this” is not always the full equivalent for the Hebrew **הַזֹּה**. When our demonstrative “this” qualifies any noun expressive of time, it no doubt means time present. When an Englishman, for instance, says “this day,” he means to convey the idea, that the section of time named in which he is performing, or is going to perform, some act, has not yet elapsed. But when a Hebrew makes use of the term **הַלִּילָה הַזֹּה** or **הַיּוֹם** or any other similar expression, he may either take it in the sense of its usual English equivalent, or he may mean that the section of time named had not yet elapsed when the act spoken of took place, or will not have elapsed when the act spoken of will or shall take place. In either case, the Hebrew **הַזֹּה** expresses simultaneity, whether past, present, or future, according to the context; while in English we distinguish between simultaneity in the present, which we express by the pronoun “this,” and in the past and future, when we

employ the pronoun "same." **הַלִּילָה הַזֹּהָה** may, therefore, mean this or the same night, according to the context.

5. Now for the proofs. In Gen. vii. 11 we read: "In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the *same day* were all the fountains of the great deep broken up." Here the "same day" in Hebrew is **בַּיּוֹם הַזֹּהָה**. It is clear from the context that the rendering of **בַּיּוֹם הַזֹּהָה** by "this day," as it must be according to Bishop Colenso, would be altogether inadmissible. Verse 13 we read: "In the self-same day (**בַּעֲצָם הַיּוֹם הַזֹּהָה**, literally, in the substance of the same day) came Noah . . . into the ark." Gen. xvii. 26, we are told: "In the self-same day (**בַּעֲצָם הַיּוֹם הַזֹּהָה**) was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son."

6. The instances quoted refer to the past. We shall now give a few which designate the future. In Lev. xxiii. the various festivals to be celebrated are enumerated. Speaking of the Passover, the Divine lawgiver says (v. 6), "And on the fifteenth day of the *same* month (**לַחְדֵשׁ הַזֹּהָה**) is the festival of unleavened bread." In ver. 15. speaking of the Omer (**עֹמֶר**), Moses continues: "And ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the self-same day (**עַד עֲצָם הַיּוֹם הַזֹּהָה**) that ye have (or rather, that ye shall have) brought the offering unto your God." Again in ver. 21 we read: "And ye shall proclaim on the self-same day (**בַּעֲצָם הַיּוֹם הַזֹּהָה**) that it may be a convocation of holiness unto you." These instances will suffice to establish our point. And now for their application.

7. No doubt, had ver. 12 ("I will pass through the land of Egypt this night"), upon which the Bishop rears his whole structure, been found detached, quite unconnected with what precedes and follows, he would have been justified in taking the phrase in the sense in which he did; but part and parcel as it is of a series of injunctions given to Moses before the tenth day of the first month (ver. 3), to be carried out on the

fourteenth day of the same month, the Bishop, as a Hebrew scholar, was bound to consult the context before he put his construction upon the phrase; and the context shows clearly enough that God did not mean to say “this,” but “the same night,” *i.e.*— the night of the day on which the Israelites were to kill the Passover. After this, it is scarcely necessary to say, that the expression “about midnight” (xi. 4) referred to the midnight of the day following that on which the Passover was to be killed, *i.e.*— the fourteenth of the first month.

8. The Bishop’s second collateral objection (73), that even if the Israelites “actually had had a previous notice ‘to take’ the lambs on the tenth day, and ‘keep them to the fourteenth’— yet how could the second notice to start have been so suddenly and completely circulated?” is quite unfounded, since the very command to celebrate the Passover was quite notice enough to the Israelites. Moses, as we see from xi. 1—8, knew that the imminent plague would be the last, and that immediately after the death of the firstborn of Egypt he would be pressed to depart with his people. The Israelites, moreover, were commanded by him to eat the Passover with their loins girded, their shoes on their feet, and their sticks in their hands (*ibid.* 11). What else were these but preparations to be in readiness for immediate departure? Is it conceivable, that while Moses gave these orders to the people, he withheld from them the object for which they were given, and the command to be ready for the departure at daybreak? Having, as we believe, demolished the basis on which the Bishop’s superstructure rests, the whole elaborate fabric falls of itself. We may therefore proceed to the consideration of the next objection.

2.—THE ISRAELITES ARMED (Chap. ix.)

9. This chapter is taken up with a discussion intended to disprove what was never stated in the Pentateuch. Taking it for granted that the word **חַמְשִׁים** (Ex. xiii. 18), rendered, in

the Authorised Version, “harnessed,” means “armed” or “in battle array,” the Bishop starts a series of objections in order to show that neither one nor the other could have been the case.

10. Now it is quite true, that the Authorised Version renders this very same word elsewhere (Josh. i. 14; iv. 12; Jud. vii. 11) by “armed men,” and that some ancient translators did the same. But still this does not prove the correctness of the rendering. The word occurs only four times in the whole of the Bible (here and in the books just referred to), in none of which does the context necessarily require the rendering “armed.” The etymology of the word is very obscure, and if, as surmised, it is connected with the Hebrew **חַמְמָה** (violence), or **חַמְזֵן** (unleavened), it would merely suggest the idea of fermentation, figuratively of anger, but not of weapons. Against this loose rendering of the Authorised Version, we could array a host of other translations, emanating from hebraists of undoubted eminence, who uniformly render this word by “equipped.” The masterly German version of the Bible, published in 1838 under the editorship of Dr. Zunz, of Berlin, always translates **חַמְשִׁים** by “*gerüstet*” (equipped). Benisch here renders it “harnessed,” and in other passages “equipped.”

11. But then the Bishop may ask if **חַמְשִׁים** does not mean “armed,” or “in battle array,” what else does it mean? Our answer might be, that it is sufficient for our purpose to show, that it does not *necessarily* mean “armed,” and that the Bishop should therefore have hesitated before he raised such an imposing hypothesis upon so unsafe a foundation. But we believe we can show what the word really means.

12. By comparing Numb. xxxii. 32 (in which the Reubenites say to Moses, We will pass girded [**חַלְצִים**] before the Eternal into the land of Canaan”) with Josh. i. 14, where the same are told by Joshua, “But ye shall pass equipped [**חַמְשִׁים**] before

your brethren," it will be evident that the word חֲלוֹצִים, in Numbers, is intended as the equivalent for חֲמִשִּׁים in Joshua; consequently the terms must be synonymous. If we can therefore ascertain the meaning of the former, we can come near enough, for all practical purposes, to the signification of the latter. Now the word חֲלוֹצִים labours under no such difficulties as חֲמִשִּׁים. Its etymology is clear. It is derived from the noun חַלֵּץ (dual, חַלְצִים), occurring ten times in the Bible, and always meaning "loins." From this is derived the well-known figure of speech, "to gird the loins," (Job, xxxviii. 3; xl. 17, and in several other places), meaning to prepare oneself for a task, and having reference to the peculiar attire of the Orientals, which prevents them engaging in any work unless the folds of the ample and wide garment be kept together, and close to the body, by a girdle round the loins. From this noun, as we said before, is derived the verb חָלֵץ, meaning, if we were allowed to coin such a word, "to loin," *i.e.*—to tie the girdle round the loins, or, in other words, to prepare for some special work, whatever this may be. This, evidently, is its meaning in Numb. xxxi. 5, Josh. iv. 13; and in fact in all other places, and in this sense it is rendered in Zunz's German translation, in Benisch's English version, Diodati's Italian, and probably by many other modern translators, whose versions, however, we have not deemed it necessary to consult in a matter which we suppose no one will dispute.

13. If חָלֵץ (Numb. xxxii. 21) means "ready," "prepared," or "equipped," it stands to reason that its synonym חֲמִשִּׁים (Exod. xiii. 18) means something very much the same.* If this word therefore, mean "equipped," or "girded," it would well agree with Ex. xii. 10, where the Israelites were commanded to be prepared for a sudden march, or, as the Hebrew idiom is, to have their loins girded, as xiii. 18 would only

* See also Dr. Kalisch's Commentary 'in loco.'

state, that the Israelites were duly prepared **חַמְשִׁים** for the march, in accordance with the order given them. If we now, in accordance with the result arrived at, substitute “equipped” for “armed,” in all the passages, in which the Authorised Version renders **חַמְשִׁים** by “armed,” as enumerated by the Bishop (58), we shall find that the sense is well sustained. But although the sacred text nowhere tells us, that the Israelites went out from Egypt armed, but only equipped — that is, provided with the necessaries for the long looked-for journey, there can yet be little doubt but that many of these wanderers were provided with arms, which were afterwards made use of, when Joshua repelled the attack of Amalek on the people.

14. But, objects the Bishop (62), at all events the Israelites possessed arms when they were numbered under Sinai (Num. i. 3). “How did they get them, unless they took them out of Egypt?” We shall show, in the “geographical group,” that the Israelites might then have been armed; yet the passages to which the Bishop refers, do not prove this. In these, the Bishop was again misled by the rendering of the Anglican version, which several times translates the Hebrew **אָבָא**, of frequent occurrence in the narrative under discussion, by “army,” or “war” (for instance, Ex. vi. 26; Num. i. 3). Of course, where there is an army, where men go forth to war, there must necessarily be arms.

15. But does **אָבָא** necessarily mean either army or war? Now let us say at once, it never means war, for which we have in Hebrew the term **מַלחְמָה**; and for the correctness of this statement we appeal to any Hebrew dictionary. **אָבָא** no doubt sometimes means army; but not because an army is a fighting multitude, but an organised body. That the leading idea in it is marshalling multitudes, according to certain characteristics or for certain purposes, or giving them an organisation under chiefs, is evident from the majority of instances occurring in the Bible, and contradicted by none.

And because an army is an organised body, by way of eminence, being divided into large sections, and then sub-divided into smaller detachments, under special officers, the name **צָבָא** was frequently, but not exclusively, given to a body of soldiers. But whether it means army, or any other organised body, must be decided by the context. Thus Num. xxxi. 3 may be translated: “Equip some of yourselves for the army” (**לְצָבָא**), as rendered in Zunz’s translation, or, more correctly, “for the host,” as translated by Benisch (the rendering of the Anglican version, “arm some of yourselves for the war,” is, looking to the strict letter, incorrect); because the war declared against Midian is spoken of. But, on the other hand, when we read in Num. viii. 25: “יִשּׁוּב מִצְבָּא הַעֲבֹדָה”—at the age of fifty he (the Levite) shall return from the **צָבָא** of the service,” i.e., shall no longer be obliged to perform service in the tabernacle; it would be against the context to render this word either *army*, or even *host*, as the peaceful service of the sanctuary is spoken of throughout the whole chapter. The sacred writer, however, makes use of the term **צָבָא**, because the Levites had been organised into a body for the special service of the tabernacle, each division having assigned to it its own work (Num. iii. 23—39).

16. When we, therefore, read in Num. i. 3, that God commanded Moses to number the Israelites from twenty years and upwards, **לִזְרָא צָבָא**, every goer-out (to or from) the **צָבָא** (host), we must look to the context for the meaning of the word. Now, neither in this nor in any of the following chapters where this census is referred to, is either war, or anything connected with it, alluded to. On the contrary, it is quite clear from what follows, that the object of the census was a re-organisation of the people—first, by separating the Levites from them; secondly, by so distributing them around the tabernacle, as the centre, that every one of the people, whether straying or lagging behind, returning from an ex-

pedition or journey, should, wherever the camp might be, find with ease the division to which he belonged, A straggler, for instance, when he reached the camp, knowing as he did the tribe to which he belonged, could, by a mere glance at the tabernacle, and without inquiry, find out his own detachment. Indeed, each division being thus properly arranged, was likewise called **אַבָּנָצָר** (Num. ii. 3—32). It is, therefore, a gratuitous assumption, that an army of warriors is here spoken of, as Bishop Colenso thinks. By **אַבָּנָצָר**, therefore, must have been meant every male Israelite above twenty years, considered as a responsible member of the community, as we should perhaps say, “of age,” and who enjoyed all the privileges of an Israelite, such as eligibility for offices, and giving a vote in public assemblies. The most suitable rendering, therefore, would be, “all that went forth to the host,” as translated by Zunz and Benisch.

17. The same remark applies to the various passages in Exodus (as vi. 4, etc.) where **אַבָּנָצָר**, in connection with the departure of Israel, is rendered in the Authorised Version “army,” when, indeed, it only means a duly organised body, or rather bodies, as the word is there in the plural; the whole people, as implied by the term, being divided into various sections, under proper leaders, in order to facilitate the departure, and thus avoid the confusion which must necessarily attend the march of a disorderly crowd. Dr. Kalisch, therefore, in his commentary *in loco*, well observes: “**אַבָּנָצָר** signifies here obviously, the tribes and their families, which on the journeys marched in separate bodies.”

3.—THE EXTENT OF THE CAMP, COMPARED WITH THE PRIESTS' DUTIES AND THE DAILY NECESSITIES OF THE PEOPLE (Chap. vi.).

18. This chapter contains three propositions. In the first, the Bishop endeavours to show, that the carrying of a whole

bullock by the priest in person, the distance of at least three quarters of a mile, as implied by Lev. iv. 11, 12, was impossible. In the second, he maintains that wood and water, in sufficient quantities for two millions of people, if at all found in the desert, could scarcely have been fetched from such a distance outside the camp. And, thirdly, that the whole population could not have gone outside the camp for the necessities of nature, as implied in Deut. xxiii. 12—14; or else, if the warriors alone did so, the cleanliness, and consequently the holiness of the camp depending thereon, according to the text, would only have been of a very limited degree.

19. Now, in reply to the first proposition, we say, that the Bishop has simply misunderstood the text. Having read in the Anglican version, “Even the whole bullock shall he [the priest] *carry forth* without the camp,” he, without consulting the original, jumped at the conclusion that the Hebrew for the two words we put in italics is נָשַׁׁל (“and he shall carry in person”), and hence argued, as neither one priest, nor indeed the three then in existence (Aaron and his two surviving sons), could have carried so heavy a load as a whole bullock, the narrative must be unhistorical. Had the Bishop not neglected to look at the Hebrew, he would have found that the text says נָהַזֵּן, the causative form of the root נָהַז (“to go forth”), and, therefore, only means “to cause to go forth,” whether carried on the shoulders of a man, on the back of an animal, or conveyed in a waggon, such as we know the Israelites had in the desert (Numb. vii. 3, and throughout the whole chapter).

20. We need hardly say, that there is no difficulty in the way of supposition, that the rubbish in the camp was, in a similar manner, regularly carted out of the camp. That the rendering of the Anglican version of the Hebrew נָשַׁׁל (“he shall carry forth”) is too narrow in sense, will appear by consulting other translations, the general accuracy of which

will not be doubted. Moses Mendelssohn, in his German translation, renders the word under discussion “*bringt er heraus*” (he brings out); Zunz the same, and not “*trägt er hinaus*” (he carries forth); Benisch, “he shall bring forth”—terms which are as comprehensive in their meaning as the Hebrew word. It is true, there exist other passages of similar import, such as Lev. iii. 4, seemingly implying the priest’s being obliged himself to carry the ashes without the camp. But it is equally true that the Hebrew in this instance likewise has וְהַזְרִיכָה, meaning that the priest shall cause the ashes to go forth, *i.e.* have them carried beyond the boundaries of the camp.

21. As the second proposition more fitly comes within the next group (the geographical), we shall discuss it in its proper place.

22. The Bishop’s third proposition entirely rests upon a misunderstanding of the text commented upon by him. The Bishop having read a certain command in Deut. xxiii. 12, concluded that it had reference to the Israelites in the desert, when the context clearly shows that this was one of the laws, the execution of which depended upon a contingency distinctly specified, which was not likely to occur in the desert, and which, when occurring, could only affect a comparatively small number of individuals. To understand what we mean, the whole passage must be read from the 10th to the 15th verse, which form one connected whole. The passage runs thus: “When a host (lit. ‘camp’) goeth forth against thine enemies, then keep thee from every evil thing . . . Thou shalt have a place (lit. ‘hand’) also without the camp, whither thou shalt go forth abroad: And thou shalt have a pin upon thy weapon . . . For the Eternal thy God goeth in the midst of thy camp, to deliver thee, and to give up thine enemies before thee.”

23. It is clear that the lawgiver here speaks of a future war, when Israel would be in possession of the Promised Land, and

in which only a portion of the population—and that, too, able-bodied men only—could be engaged. For such a contingency, the lawgiver points out the means for preserving and enforcing cleanliness in the camp. But not a word is said about the means employed for preserving cleanliness among the Israelites while encamped in the desert; although when we consider the number of the laws given, all bearing on personal and general cleanliness, and the general order in the camp, we cannot doubt but that proper sanitary measures were adopted; a knowledge of which, however, like that of so many other incidents immaterial to the object of the sacred historian, has not reached us. That there was no lack of means for this purpose will be easily perceived, when it is considered that the Israelites in the desert possessed cattle and waggons.

4.—THE SIZE OF THE COURT OF THE TABERNACLE, COMPARED WITH THE NUMBER OF THE CONGREGATION (Chap. ii.).

24. Quoting Lev. viii. 4 (14 is a misprint in the book), the Bishop, by an elaborate calculation, shows that the utmost number of persons which the court of the tabernacle could hold was 5,000, and that it was, therefore, a physical impossibility for the whole congregation, consisting, if only including the able-bodied men, of 600,000, to have been assembled there, as distinctly stated. Now, it did not require the Bishop's nice measurement of the area of the tabernacle to prove that 600,000 could not have assembled in it. But where is it said that the congregation which assembled at Moses's call numbered, at least, 600,000 men? This assumption on the part of the Bishop is quite gratuitous, as we shall show.

25. The terms employed by the Divine lawgiver for designating the multitude that followed him from Egypt are, **בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל** (children of Israel), **עַם** (people), **קָרְבָּן** (assembly), and **עַדָּה**

(congregation), which are often used indiscriminately, and not rarely in the same narrative interchange with each other, without implying any difference in the meaning. Nevertheless, each of these terms is marked by a leading idea of its own, which characterises it, and which term is used exclusively when this leading idea is to be emphasised, or when the sense depends upon it. As the discussion of the leading ideas marking "children of Israel" and "people" are immaterial to our purpose, we dismiss these at once. There now remain only the last two. That these two are sufficiently alike in their signification in a general sense, and are therefore frequently interchanged, we have already stated. That they, however, are not identical, is evident from Prov. v. 13. There we read, "Yet a little, and I should have been in all kinds of evil, in the midst of the congregation and assembly" (**בְּתוֹךְ קָרְבָּן עַדְךָ**). Had the sacred writer considered these two words identical, he would only have used one. Again, the very fact that we find them together in a constructive state **קָרְבָּן עַדְתָּה**, "assembly of the congregation"—(as, for instance, Exod. xii. 6; Numb. xiv. 7), shows that in the mind of the writer one of these words would not have fully expressed his meaning, and consequently, that each term possesses a peculiar signification of its own. The question, therefore, arises, What is this peculiar signification distinguishing each of these terms, which, in a general loose sense, so frequently coincide?

26. Our first attention will of course be directed to the etymology. Now this is as clear as daylight. The noun **קָרְבָּן** is derived from a verb which occurs scores of times, and always means "to assemble," "to gather people together," regardless of the purpose for which the gathering takes place. Its derivative **קָרְבָּן**, therefore, it stands to reason, would only signify a gathering or an assembly of people.

27. Equally clear is the etymology of **עַדְתָּה**. It is derived from the root **עַדְעַת**, "to appoint." This leading idea runs through-

out all its derivatives. Thus אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד generally rendered in the Authorised Version “tabernacle,” in reality only means “tent of appointment,” or “appointed tent,” *i.e.*—for meeting God, as invariably rendered in Benisch’s version. Thus מוֹעֵד, generally translated “festival,” only means “appointed,” *sc.* season; and, in consonance with this idea, the derivative עֹדָה, in the strict sense of the word, would mean “an appointed assembly,” or, as we should say, a representative body—in the wider sense of the word—these represented the constituency itself, and therefore the congregation.

28. Now we know that etymology is not always a safe guide in the determination of the signification of words: that in process of time the leading idea often gets obliterated; and that a secondary, or even a tertiary idea takes place. We have, therefore, to enquire whether the author of the Pentateuch had present to his mind this etymological distinction between the two terms discussed, and actually, when occasion called for it, employed them with reference to this distinction. Let us, therefore, look out for some decisive passages in the Pentateuch in which the *prima facie* sense of the text would lead us before-hand to expect one or the other of the two terms.

29. We turn, therefore, to Numbers. Chap. xxxv., from 9 to 31, gives an account of the cities of refuge which the Israelites, when in the Land of Promise, were to open for the benefit of man-slayers. The particulars are laid down under which the fugitive was to be considered guilty of murder, and therefore executed, or innocent, and so protected from the avenger of blood. The jurisdiction, in these cases, which naturally required great discrimination, wisdom, and impartiality, was entrusted to a public body which we will leave for a moment unnamed. What public body did the lawgiver entrust with this important function? Was it the whole people? Not very likely, as the meeting of the whole people, after they were settled in their own country, and consequently spread over a wide extent of land, and engaged in all kinds of pur-

suits, at every such contingency would involve a physical impossibility; it would, further, have been unwise, as the mass of the people could hardly have been qualified for investigating matters of this kind, and would, moreover, have been unnecessary, as the people were to have rulers appointed to judge them (Deut. xvi. 18). If, therefore, the distinction which we have drawn between קָהָל (assembly) and עַדָּה (congregation) is correct, the public body to which this jurisdiction was entrusted should be designated by the second term. And when we apply this test, and examine the passage referred to, sure enough we meet with the term עַדָּה four times (verses 12, 24, and 25), and not once with the word קָהָל. And if we further turn to the parallel passage in Josh. xx., we find (ver. 4) the elders of the city of refuge referred to, and the "congregation" (עַדָּה, verses 6 and 9) spoken of. It is evident, that the public body which both Moses and Joshua had in mind was one appointed to its functions, in whatever way and by whomsoever the appointment might have been made.

30. To make assurance doubly sure, let us apply another test, in order to ascertain the correctness of the distinction drawn by us. Let us see whether we cannot find some passages in the Pentateuch which would prove that the sacred historian considered the terms עַדָּה ("congregation"), and זִקְנִים ("elders," *i.e.*, the representatives of the people), as equivalent, and therefore interchangeable; in the same way as, for instance, an arithmetician would talk of twenty shillings or one pound sterling as terms perfectly equivalent. Let us turn to Ex. xii. 3. There we read, God said to Moses and Aaron, " Speak to the whole congregation of the children of Israel," etc. God then continued until verse 20 to give instructions to the two brothers how the Israelites were to keep the Passover. Now, what do we read in the next following verse (21)? "And Moses called all the elders of Israel," etc. Unless we are prepared to maintain that Moses either did not understand God, or wilfully disobeyed Him, we must admit, that in the mind of

the lawgiver “elders of Israel” was a full equivalent for the “congregation of Israel;” and that when he gave to the elders the instructions he had received from God for the “congregation,” he believed he had fulfilled the command of the Supreme.

31. Again, in Lev. ix. 1, we read that Moses called Aaron, his sons, and the elders of Israel, desiring Aaron to give certain directions to the “children of Israel” concerning certain sacrifices to be complied with at once. We are then informed (ver. 5) that they (the children of Israel) obeyed, and that the whole congregation (**עַדָּה**) approached and stood before the Eternal. Unless we assume that the calling of the elders by Moses was objectless, and that the congregation approached and stood before the Eternal of its own accord, without being called, we must believe that those who in the first verse are called elders are identical, with the “children of Israel” of the third and “the congregation” of the fifth verse. Nay, more, that this “congregation” or representatives of the people are referred to, in verses 23 and 24 of the same chapter, as the people itself, which they represented. We think, therefore, we have established the proposition, that, although in many cases the lawgiver, in the wider sense of the word, indiscriminately applied to the whole of the people either the term **קָהָל** (“assembly”) or **עַדָּה** (“congregation”), yet when he spoke of the elders in their corporate capacity, as the people’s representative body, he employed the word **עַדָּה**. When we, consequently, meet with it in the Pentateuch, we must carefully examine the context of every particular passage in order to ascertain the sense which the sacred writer attached to it. Is it, therefore, too daring a hypothesis to maintain that, should the sacred penman, in Lev. viii. 14, as he actually did, have employed the term **עַדָּה** (“congregation”), and not **קָהָל** (“assembly”), he might have meant only elders, and not the whole people? To us it is clear, that, if a word in any passage has two well ascertained meanings, the one leading to

an absurdity, and the other making good sense, the interpreter is bound to hold fast by the latter. Whatever the number of the elders of Israel may have been, it is not probable that they exceeded 5,000. But as, according to the calculation of the Bishop, the court of the tabernacle could hold this number of persons, all the difficulties so elaborately set forth by him are removed.

MOSES AND JOSHUA ADDRESSING THE PEOPLE (Chap. v.).

32. COMMENTING upon Deut. v. 1, and Josh. viii. 34, 35, where we are told that Joshua, according to the command of Moses, read the Law before the whole congregation, the Bishop points out the physical impossibility involved in the statement, that one single individual should have read such a volume as the Law to the whole people, consisting of at least two millions, and that they should have heard him. Now our discussion of the preceding chapter will have sufficiently acquainted our readers with the figure of speech habitually employed by the sacred writers, and according to which they frequently identified the representatives with the represented, and *vice versa*, and introduced the chief as speaking to the whole people, when he really addressed only the representatives, or the officers of the people. To the instances previously given, we will now add one more.

33. In Josh. i. 10, 11, we read that Joshua commanded the officers of the people to go about in the camp and bid the people lay in provisions for the imminent march. And in the next verse we find a direct address by Joshua to the Reubenites, Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh, many myriads in number, whom he could have as little addressed in person as he could have the whole people on Mount Gerizim. It is clear that, even as he gave his orders to the people concerning the provisions through the agency of their officers, so did he

address the Reubenites and their companions through the instrumentality of their chiefs. When we, therefore read in Josh. viii. that he read to the whole people the Law, the sacred writer meant no more than that this was done by order of Joshua — he the leader standing on the mount and reading the Law to those around him, while those appointed for the purpose simultaneously read the same book to the myriads encamped round Gerizim and Ebal as a centre. The whole people, including women and children, heard Joshua read the Law, by deputy, or rather deputies.

34. It is further a gratuitous assumption on the part of the Bishop that a copy of the Law was written by Joshua himself upon the stones set up on Mount Ebal, on the very day that he read the law to the people. The statement that the chief of the nation himself undertook the slow and laborious work of writing the law on stones borders upon the ludicrous. As well might it be maintained that the manual labour of the “Code Napoleon” was executed by Napoleon himself, and not some clerk, because this body of laws was digested under his auspices, and sent forth to the world by his name, and not by that of the scribes, who made out the fair copy for publicity. The stones, with the law written on them, were no doubt ready against the day appointed for the solemn reading of the law, and were in the course of the day solemnly set up.

THE ISRAELITES DWELLING IN TENTS (Chap. viii.)

35. THE 8th chapter involves two distinct propositions. The first is that Lev. xxiii. 42, 43, commanding the Israelites for seven days, on the Feast of Tabernacles, to dwell in booths, in commemoration of their ancestors having dwelled in booths when going out from Egypt, is contradicted by other passages in the Pentateuch (as, for instance, Ex. xvi. 16), from which it appears that the Israelites dwelled in tents while in the

wilderness. The second is, that even if these two conflicting statements were reconcilable, and the more credible supposition of their having dwelled in tents admitted, the question would still have to be answered, Whence could they have obtained, and how transported, the immense number of tents required for such a vast multitude, already encumbered with so many other necessaries for the long journey?

36. Here the Bishop is again at fault, simply because he neglected to examine in the original language the accurate meaning of the words סֶכֶךְ (booth) and אָרוֹן (tent), upon which he comments. He takes it for granted that because סֶכֶךְ is generally rendered "booth," therefore this must be a full equivalent for the Hebrew original. Now this is a mistake, as the Hebrew סֶכֶךְ is a much more comprehensive term than the English "booth." סֶכֶךְ, no doubt, frequently means "booth;" not because it is a temporary dwelling made of boards or boughs, but because it covers especially from above, and therefore affords shelter. In fact, covering and giving shelter is the leading idea of this word, derived, as every Hebraist knows, and as every dictionary shows, from סְכַךְ "to cover," "to shelter." The noun סֶכֶךְ, therefore, in accordance with this etymology, means any shelter, natural or artificial. Thus we read in Job. xxxviii. 39: "Wilt thou hunt the prey for the lioness? or fill the appetite of the young lions, when they couch in their dens, and abide in their *covert* to lie in wait?" The original for "*covert*" here is סֶכֶךְ. Here, evidently, a natural sheltering place, or jungle, is spoken of. In Gen. xxxiii. 17 we read: "And for his cattle he (Jacob) made booths" (סֶכֶות). Here artificial sheltering places, probably sheds, are spoken of. Again, in 2 Sam. xi. 11, we read: "And Uriah said unto David, The ark, Israel, and Jehudah dwell in *tents*" (בְּסֶכֶות). It will be noticed that here an army besieging a city is referred to; and as soldiers, when in camp, generally dwell in tents, the Authorised Ver-

sion correctly, so far as the sense here is concerned, rendered **סְכִינָה** “tents,” and not “booths.” In Amos ix. 11 we read: “On that day (says God) will I raise up the *tabernacle* of Israel that has fallen.” Here the Hebrew **סְכִינָה** is rendered in the Authorised Version tabernacle; and although taken figuratively, yet the structure which the prophet had in mind was solid—a strong building—as shown by the whole context. These instances will suffice to show the wide range of the term **סְכִינָה**, rendered in Lev. xxiii. 42, 43, “booth;” and as we in English have no such comprehensive word, it is evident that **סְכִינָה**, in every passage in which it occurs, should be translated according to the requirement of the context. If therefore, the Bishop believes that the writer of Ex xvi. 16 wished to convey the impression that the Israelites, like warriors in a camp, dwelled in tents, he ought to have corrected the rendering of the Authorised Version in Leviticus, and, in accordance with 2 Sam. xi. 11, substituted “tents” for “tabernacles” and “booths,” but not stated that the two texts conflicted, the conflict only existing in the translation, but not in the original. The fact, however, is that the historian nowhere told us that all the Israelites dwelled in tents; and this leads us to the discussion of the second proposition.

37. No doubt many Israelites did, ever since their departure from Egypt, dwell in tents; and very probably, in process of time, as opportunity served, all of them possessed tents. But when they went out from Egypt, laden as they were with other more urgent necessaries for the journey, all of them neither required tents nor were they provided with them, but for a time, until tents were procured, sheltered themselves, when shelter was required, as well as they could. And when it is considered that the departure of the Israelites took place in the most genial season of the year, when there was no rain, and the air comparatively cool; that the Israelites were a hardy population, used to work in the open field (Ex. i. 13)

under the broiling sun of Egypt; that, compelled as they were to scatter themselves over the whole land of Egypt in order to gather straw (ibid. ver. 12), and therefore, far away from their homes, had probably to spend their nights in the open air — it will be easily conceived that these sons of toil required much less shelter than other populations, accustomed to a different mode of life, would have needed, and that very little shelter was sufficient to protect them from the consequences of exposure to the atmospheric influences of the desert, which would have proved most destructive to unacclimatised wanderers. A garment stretched over a few poles, the shadow of the waggons, or the cover of these waggons (Numb. vii. 3), and perhaps other contrivances with which we are not acquainted, may in the spring have sufficed to afford them shelter; and before the scorching summer or the chilly winter came, they had time enough to provide themselves with means for a more efficient shelter. The construction of the tabernacle shows that they neither lacked materials nor artificers for such purposes; and we shall show, further on, that they must have possessed opportunities for procuring the necessary materials whenever they required them.

38. It is true we read in Ex. xvi. 16: “Take ye (manna) every man for them which are in his tent” (Authorised Version, tents, plural; this is a mistranslation; in the original נִזְבָּן is in the singular). But this is only a Hebrew idiom, meaning that every man should take manna to his family, or the spot which was their home for the time. Thus Joshua (xxii. 4), in dismissing the Reubenites after the conclusion of the war, said to them: “Get you unto your tents;” when he meant to say, as the context shows, “Return to your homes,” on the other side of Jordan. The same phrase, in the same sense, is repeated in verses 6, 7, and 8. Thus we read in Judges vii. 8, that Gideon sent the people to their tents — *i.e.*, to their homes, wherever these might have been, and of whatever

materials they might have consisted, whether permanent or temporary. Numerous similar passages are to be found all throughout the Bible, as every concordance will show.

39. But, then, will the Bishop ask, are not in Lev. xviii. 42, the materials of which the sheltering places referred to are to be constructed distinctly mentioned, and do these not prove that booths and no other kind of sheltering places are spoken of? This is another of the Bishop's mistakes. The original does not speak of "boughs," but of "the fruit of goodly trees" (פְּרִי עַזְּ הַדָּר). The Bishop simply neglected to consult the Hebrew, or he would have seen his error. Benisch, in his version, translates, "And ye shall take you on the first day the fruit of the tree *hadar*" (ver. 40). This alone is sufficient to show that the lawgiver did not point out these vegetables as the materials for the construction of booths, but for quite a different purpose. What this purpose was, the Bishop, can to this day see in every synagogue throughout the world during the Feast of Tabernacles. With the four vegetable productions in their hands as mentioned in the text, the Israelites of this day rejoice before the Eternal their God seven days, just as their ancestors did in the Temple of old.

THE FAMILY OF JUDAH (Chap. ii.)

40. In this chapter, the Bishop endeavours to show that Hezron and Hamul, Judah's grandchildren, could not have been born in the land of Canaan, as Gen. xlvi. 12 seems to imply. Calculating that Judah was twenty years old when he married, and forty-two when he went down with Jacob to Egypt, he shows, that Judah could not have become a grandfather by Pharez in the course of twenty-two years. The only proof upon which he depends is the supposed simultaneity of the sale of Joseph into slavery with the marriage of Judah, the narrative of this event immediately following the former, and

commencing with the words “at that time” (Gen. xxxviii. 1). Now this difficulty has eight centuries ago being fairly stated by Ibn Ezra *in loco*, and in accordance with the analogy offered by Deut. x. 8, where בָּעֵת הַהִיא cannot be taken, as shown by the context in its literal signification, “at that time,” as an interval of thirty-eight years must have elapsed between the separation of the tribe of Levi, in the second year of Israel’s departure from Egypt, and their journey to Jotbath (ver. 7) in the fortieth year therof—suggests that in Gen. xxxviii. 1 וַיְהִי בָּעֵת הַהִיא must mean, “and it came to pass about that time,” *i.e.*—some years before the sale of Joseph. In further explanation of the view of Ibn Ezra, we insert the following communication made to us on the subject by a biblical scholar:—

Two facts must be noted. First, that in the East the age of puberty is 12 (so Ibn Ezra asserts, and so it is known from the usage of eastern countries. Read any book of Travels in the East); secondly, that the event did not occur AFTER the sale of Joseph. That Scripture cannot here maintain strict chronological order is self-evident; for surely all the events could not have occurred between Joseph's sale and his being brought into Egypt; and between these two events is the whole chapter inserted. It is evident that the history of Judah's family is a break into that of Joseph. The reason for its being here mentioned, is to contrast the conduct of one brother with that of the other in similar circumstances. All that the words **בָּעֵת הַהִיא** [at that time] fairly imply is, that the events recorded occurred after Jacob's arrival in Canaan. Now when Judah was twelve years old he was already in Canaan; for Judah was about four years older than Joseph, who was six years old when Jacob left Laban. (For directly after Joseph's birth Jacob wished to leave, and Laban induced him to stay six years for sheep.)

Now be it remembered, that in the East constitutional development is such that at twelve years puberty is attained.

At that period the occurrence narrated in ver. 18 takes place.

In one year are born Pharez and Zarah. Judah's age—28.

When they go down to Egypt, Judah is at least 42, and Pharez had already had two children, called Hezron and Hamul.

41. Although this explanation is admissible, inasmuch as it only requires us to suppose that the event narrated in the chapter commented upon took place a few years before the sale of Joseph, it is not the only solution of the difficulty that may be offered. We shall put forward another, which some may, perhaps, consider simpler, and therefore more satisfactory.

42. The concluding passage in the verse commented upon, in the original, runs thus: **וַיָּמָת עֵר וְאֹנוֹן בַּאֲרִזָּן בְּנֵעַן וַיָּהִי** — **בְּנֵי פְּרֵז חֶזְרוֹן וְחַמּוֹל** — literally translated: “And there died Er and Onan in the land of Canaan, and there were the sons of Pharez, Hezron and Hamul.” In this sentence, it will be seen, there is something quite unusual in the construction and abrupt in the termination, suggesting the idea that some word is required for the completion of the sense. That the construction is unusual will be evident to any one who will compare the wording of this portion of the genealogical account with that of ver. 17, which refers to an analogous case, for here also the sacred historian informs us, that Asher, when he went down to Egypt, had two grandsons; yet the text does not say **וַיָּהִי בְּנֵי בְּרִיעָה**, “and there were the sons of Beriah,” or “the sons of Beriah were, Heber and Malchiel,” but simply **וּבְנֵי בְּרִיעָה**, “and the sons of Beriah,” etc. This could scarcely have been unintentional. Nor could the well-known fact that Er and Onan had died in the land of Canaan, immediately followed by the mention of the two sons of Pharez have been unintentional; for had the sacred historian only wished to repeat what we already know from Gen. xxxviii. 7 — 10, the natural wording of ver. 12 would have been

וּבְנֵי יְהוּדָה עָרָ וְאָנוֹן וְשֵׁלָה וּפְרֵזָן וּוָרָה וּבְנֵי פְרֵזָן חֶצְרָן—this:—
 this:—
 וְחַמּוֹל נִימְתָּ עָרָ וְאָנוֹן בְּאָרֶן בְּנֵעַן “And the sons of Judah (were), Er, and Onan, and Shelah and Pharez; and the sons of Pharez (were) Hezron and Hamul. Er and Onan, however, died in the land of Canaan.” All these apparent irregularities lead to the conclusion, that the sacred writer had in his mind some word well understood by him and his contemporaries, and for this very reason, in accordance with the occasional usage in Hebrew, omitted. If we therefore could discover a word that should suitably complete the sense, remove the abruptness of the sentence, account for the existing unusual construction, and at the same time agree with the Hebrew idiom, we should be justified in saying that this, or at least some synonymous term, was in the mind of the historian when he penned this verse. Now the word fulfilling all these conditions is **תְּחִתָּם** (in their stead). Let us supply this word, and the sentence would run, “And Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan, **וַיְהִי** (תְּחִתָּם) **בְּנֵי פְרֵזָן חֶצְרָן וְחַמּוֹל** and there were (in their stead) the sons of Pharez, Hezron and Hamul”—that is, Judah adopted his two grandchildren for his two deceased sons, Er and Onan, securing to them two portions in the inheritance of his property, instead of one, to which they would have been entitled but for this adoption. What the sacred writer, therefore, in this verse, wished to tell us was, not that Hezron and Hamul were born in the land of Egypt, but that they took the place of the two sons of Judah, who died in Canaan, and therefore, in accordance with the notions of the time, and very likely, with the then existing usages, were to every intent and purpose considered as identified with the deceased, and consequently numbered among those of Jacob’s descendants who went down with him to Egypt, although they were born in that country.

43. That **תְּחִתָּם** is not rarely idiomatically omitted in the text, although required for the completion of the sense, is evident

from Ex. xxi. In this chapter, from ver. 22 to 37, the law-giver enumerates the various injuries for which redress may be demanded, and the punishments to be inflicted. Here the lawgiver, as it seems indifferently, sometimes employs the word **תַּחַת** (instead), and at other times omits it. Thus in verses 36 and 37 we read: “His owner shall surely pay ox for (**תַּחַת**) ox . . . Five oxen shall he pay for (**תַּחַת**) the ox, and four sheep for (**תַּחַת**) the sheep.” Yet, in verse 32, **תַּחַת**, under analogous circumstances, is omitted; for there we read: “Thirty shekels of silver shall he give to his master,” evidently meaning for the slave killed; that is in Hebrew **תַּחַתִּיו**, not expressed, although understood. Again, ver. 34, we read: “The owner of the pit shall pay.” Pay for what? Evidently for the ox or ass referred to in the preceding verse. Yet **תַּחַתִּיו** is again left out. A similar passage we find in 1 Kings xx. 39; one of the sons of the prophets addressed the King thus: “Thy servant went out into the midst of the war; and behold a man turned aside, and brought a man unto me, and said, Keep this man; if by any means he be missing, then shall thy life be for (**תַּחַת**) his life, or else thou shalt weigh a talent of silver.” Here *for him* (**תַּחַתִּיו**) is evidently understood, and again idiomatically omitted, it being left to the mind of the hearer or reader inwardly to supply this word. We do not know whether these instances will convince our readers of the correctness of our interpretation. To us they appear both sufficient and convincing.

THE BISHOP'S COMMENT ON EXODUS XXI. 21, 22.

44. We now proceed to the consideration of another difficulty started in the Bishop's work, and which concludes the philosophical group. Commenting on Ex. xxi. 20, 21, the Bishop, in his introduction (p. 9), describes the horror excited in the mind of an intelligent Christian native, with whose assistance

he translated the Bible into the Zulu tongue, when they came to the following passage: "If a man smite his servant, or his maid, with a rod, and he die under his hand, he shall be surely punished. Notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two, he shall not be punished; for he is his money."

45. The revulsion of feeling experienced by the Bishop's coadjutor is clearly traced by the Doctor to the implied sanction given by God in His Law to Slavery, and to the cruelty involved in the injunction that if the ill-used slave survive his master's ill-usage a day or two, his death shall not be punished. Now the first point is part and parcel of the group which we call objections on moral grounds, and which will in due time be considered. For the present we will only observe, by the way, that slavery was a moral progress in the time of Moses, and much later: that it was one of the necessary stages through which mankind, in its outward march, had to pass; and that its premature abolition before the social order was ripe for it would have greatly thrown mankind back — would have led to extraordinary atrocities, and fearfully demoralised the human race. All that a wise lawgiver, then, could do was to prepare the way for its extinction in the right time, and meanwhile so to regulate the relations between master and slave as to keep the authority of the former within proper bounds. In how far the Law of Moses effected this, we shall see in due time. For the present we shall confine ourselves to the discussion of the second point.

46. No doubt, had the Law permitted the master, as the passage, as understood by the Bishop, implies, to smite, or rather chastise, his slave with any instrument or rod, as the text says, that fell into his hands, and only punished the perpetrator for the slave's death by a fine, as the text before us seems to imply, remitting this fine or punishment altogether in the event of the slave not expiring under the blows of his master — there would be just reason to doubt the Divine origin of such a

law. But is the sense given to this passage according to the Anglican Version borne out by the original text? Certainly not. We shall now give the proper rendering of these two verses, and confidently appeal for its accuracy to every Hebrew scholar — nay, to Bishop Colenso himself. The correct translation of this passage is [we shall, in order to facilitate the comparison, print in italics the words in the rendering of which the Authorised Version was mistaken]: “And if a man smite his servant or his maid-servant with *the* rod, and he die under his hand; he shall surely be *avenged*. Notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two, he shall not be *avenged*: for he is his money.”

47. Now from this it is clear, that the chastising rod of which the lawgiver speaks was not *a*, that is, *any* rod, or in fact any instrument arbitrarily taken up, whether fit for such a purpose or not, but *the* rod, that is, the cane appropriated for this purpose, and sanctioned by law and usage. It is evident, that the use of any other instrument save *the* rod was in itself an illegal act. But, continues the lawgiver, even if the master should employ the proper instrument for the chastisement of his slave, yet, if the latter die under his hand, the act must be considered as premeditated, and consequently as murder; since the instrument in itself, without any such intention, would not produce death. In this case, we are informed, that this death is not to be punished by a fine or some other expiation, but avenged — *i.e.* by retribution — life for life. In this case, the slayer was to be put to death. But if the slave does not die under the hand of his master, as he did not chastise the slave with a murderous instrument, the slayer shall not be put to death, for the slave is his money; and as it is against the interest of the master to destroy his property, the presumption is, that he only wished to inflict a reasonable chastisement, which accidentally resulted in death, and therefore should not be considered as murder, leaving it open to

the authorities to enact laws suitable to such cases. That this, and no other, is the meaning of this passage will be clear, when we compare these verses with that immediately following (ver. 22). In this the punishment for a certain crime, being a kind of homicide is prescribed, and the words of the text are “he shall be surely amerced” (**עַנוֹתָשׁ יִעֲנֶנֶת**), and not, as in the passage commented upon, avenged, **נִקְםָה יִנְקֹם**. Further, this is a law which does not involve any speculative point intended to meet some rare case, but refers to an institution co-existent with Israel’s autonomy. Cases which this law was intended to meet must have occurred from time to time, and Israelitish courts of justice must have had to inquire into the particulars. It is therefore reasonably to be assumed that the prevailing practice was based upon this passage. And what was this practice? Happily, ancient rabbis who lived near enough to the period when the Jewish state still existed, and therefore must have been acquainted with this practice, distinctly inform us (Sanhedrin, 52 b), the slayer of a slave, under the circumstances described in ver. 20, was put to death by the sword; and however much prejudiced men may be against rabbinical interpretation where it refers to mere matter of opinion, the validity of rabbinical evidence in matters of fact will hardly be questioned by any one.

II.

GROUP OF GEOGRAPHICAL OBJECTIONS.

1. The objections with which we lately dealt arose from the misapprehension of certain Hebrew words. We had before us the whole treasury of the best vocabularies and the stores of concordances, to which we could appeal in verification of

our statements. The new group of objections which we are now going to consider, with one single exception, admits of no such treatment. To combat these, a quite different line of defence is required.

2. Our task would have been easy, or more probably quite unnecessary, had there existed, at the time of the exodus, geographers like Ritter, or travellers like Robinson and Stanley, who had left behind for reference minute descriptions of the regions through which the Israelites passed in their journey from Egypt to Palestine; or historians like Macaulay accurately depicting, for the benefit of posterity, domestic life and domestic institutions, and those minor incidents which although not productive of any great events, yet account for numbers of social phenomena which thereby become intelligible to later generations. But neither of these objects lay in the plan of Providence. It was not the history of a people, but the history of an idea which the writer of the Pentateuch was destined to write. The main object of the sacred historian was to trace the rise, progress, and development of the religious idea from Abraham to the death of Moses — when this religious idea had received its full expansion, had been clearly defined and firmly established in the minds of a large population. The geographical features of Egypt and the regions through which Israel passed, as well as the institutions of this people and their history, are only referred to in so far as they are connected with the sacred penman's main object — the history of the religious idea — and as far as an acquaintance with the former was calculated to throw light upon the latter. In the absence, therefore, of direct evidence for disproving the Bishop's statements, we must have recourse to indirect evidence. If this, in one respect, proves less satisfactory than direct proofs, inasmuch as from the nature of the case it lacks completeness, it yet, on the other hand, has the invaluable advantage of being undesigned, and therefore

free from all suspicion of having been recorded to serve a special purpose. Indeed, in the minds of an intelligent jury, such undesigned and incidental evidence very often weighs more than a direct proof that might have been devised for the very purpose of meeting any doubt. Should we, therefore, succeed in eliciting on cross-examination such a body of indirect geographical and historical evidence, chiefly from the very impugned writings—that is, from the mouth of the defendant himself at the bar of publicity—as should clearly lead to the inference that the charge is groundless, we shall hold, that the author of the Pentateuch is entitled to the verdict of Not Guilty, although he should be unable to rebut the charge by direct evidence.

3. The charges of the Bishop against the historical character of the Pentateuch, in as far as they come within the second or geographical group, scattered as they are over the whole volume, and as often only involved in other objections as formulated in distinct articles of impeachment, may yet be reduced into two propositions. The first is, that the account of the Exodus cannot be historical, because such a vast multitude as the Israelites are represented to have been, could not for forty years have found water in the desert. With this difficulty is clearly connected what may be termed the wood and pasture question, likewise repeatedly urged in the book; for, on the Bishop's own admission, wherever there exists water in the desert there also exists vegetation, consequently also wood for fuel and grass for the large herds and flocks which the Israelites, according to the sacred text, possessed all the while they were in the desert. The second proposition may be formulated thus: Granting that there was an exodus, how could those millions have met in one day with their herds and flocks in one city—Rameses? how marched out in one and the same day? Granted that there was some pasturage in the desert, how is it that it was not trampled down at once by

those countless droves of cattle and flocks of sheep? How could the desert yield that large number of beasts requisite for sacrifices, and especially those thousands of pigeons required by women after childbirth, as well as on other occasions? We shall now proceed to the examination of the first proposition.

4. We have alluded to one single exception in the mode of discussion pursued by us in this group. This exception is the etymological examination of the term **מִדְבָּר** (desert or wilderness), so often referred to in the Bible, and the definition of its meaning. **מִדְבָּר** is derived from the root **דָּבַר** meaning to arrange, to lead, to drive. When referring to the arrangement of thoughts and their utterance — *i.e.*, to their succession to each other in words, we translate the verb by “to speak,” in which sense it occurs hundreds of times in the Bible. When used substantively, as **דָּבָר**, it means “driving or sweeping away,” and we render it “pestilence;” when used with the formative **מ** in **מִדְבָּר**, it denotes the place to which beasts, generally herds and flocks, are led for the purpose of pasture; in this sense it is allied to the German “treiben,” the English “drive,” the German “trift” (pasture-ground), and the English “turf.” This analogy will become evident when we bear in mind, that, closely allied in meaning with **דָּבָר**, is the root **דָּרַב**, or rather is identical with it, as preserved in the word **דָּרְבָּן**, meaning the instrument employed to stimulate an ox to go on — *i.e.*, a goad. From this it is clear, that there is nothing in the root of this word or in its derivatives in any way associated with the idea of a desert or of barrenness. The idea which it conveyed to the Hebrew mind was simply that of pasture-ground, probably akin to our common, or, perhaps better, what is called “sheep-walk” in thinly-inhabited regions, such as Australia. Indeed, the pasture-grounds of the desert are distinctly mentioned in the Bible. Thus, Joel (i. 19, and again ii. 22) speaks of the pastures of the

desert (**נְאֹת מִרְבֵּר**) in connection with cattle, in such a manner as to show clearly that these were the usual pasture-grounds of herds and flocks. The Psalmist, too (lxv. 13), refers to the herbage of the pasture-grounds of the desert (**נְאֹת מִרְבֵּר**) in connection with flocks. By this we do not mean to say that **מִרְבֵּר** does not sometimes also designate desert places, not because they are barren, but because they are uncultivated and uninhabited, akin to our own “wilderness.” When we, therefore, meet with this word, we must look to the context to see whether it means pasture-ground or desert. We shall have to refer to this important distinction, which the readers will do well to bear in mind.

5. We have, further, to observe that it is not our intention to entangle ourselves in the maze of the various names by which parts of the desert and the adjacent territories are designated in the Bible. It is nothing to our purpose where the portion of the desert through which the Israelites passed was situated, or whether Horeb or Sinai, or in fact any other of the places mentioned, have been properly identified. We take the desert such as the Bible characterises it, extending from the south of Palestine to the north of Egypt, including the tract of land now known by the name of the Sinaitic peninsula, and bordering in the west, on the Mediterranean. We further believe that the same name, in the same book, always designates the same place.

6. Having made these preliminary remarks, we shall endeavour to establish the following position:— that the desert in which the Israelites, after their departure from Egypt, sojourned for forty years, was then and before more frequently visited than at later periods, not only by caravans, but by whole tribes, and that it was even the permanent abode of whole populations. All this will appear incidentally from the Pentateuch itself. Should these references, or the undesigned evidences as we term them, prove consistent with and support

each other, we hold that, in accordance with our premises, we should be justified in drawing the conclusion, that, where there were considerable populations, both migratory and settled, there must have existed the means of subsistence. From this, then, we should again be justified in inferring, in the first place, that the desert of the Pentateuch, wherever situated, presented natural features, no longer to be found in the regions now believed to have been the scene of the exodus, as described in the Pentateuch: and in the second, that means must have been found by either the migratory or permanent populations, more probably by both, to supply the deficiencies of nature, especially as far as the scarcity of water was concerned, by artificial means. What we at first only considered as an inference, we shall afterwards endeavour to establish by similar indirect evidence, and thirdly, that the Israelites in their journeys were in a great measure guided by the considerations which we delineated, and even had a special organisation for the supply of water, which no doubt had sometimes to be brought from considerable distances. Now for the evidence establishing our position, commencing with the age of Abraham and concluding with that of David.

7. When Abraham, at the command of God, enters the land of Canaan, we see him continuing his journey towards the south (Gen. xii. 8), penetrating so far as to encounter no difficulty (at least, none is referred to in the text) in transferring himself with all his property and retinue, to Egypt (ibid. 8). Here Abraham's herds and flocks, received a considerable increase (ibid. 16), yet he encounters no difficulty in returning by the way of the desert to his former encampment in the south of Palestine (ibid. xiii. 2). No doubt Abraham took the shortest route. But even now, travellers through the desert from Egypt to Palestine, we believe, take provisions for twelve days. Now, if it be remembered that

Abraham, unlike modern travellers on camels or horseback, was encumbered with much cattle, that could march only very very slowly (*ibid.* xxxiii. 14), and that it would have been impossible to carry with him sufficient provender and water for so many beasts, the inference is clear, that either the distance between Egypt and Palestine was not so great then as it is now — *i.e.*, that pasture-land, supplying grass and water, extended much farther into the desert than it does now -- or that there existed then in the desert means of obtaining these necessaries, which are at present unknown. That cultivated, inhabitable parts of Canaan extended much farther to the south — *i.e.*, into what is now a part of the desert, is further evident from the description given in Gen. xiii. 10 of the district once occupied by Sodom and Gomorrah. These cities must have occupied the ground now covered by the Dead Sea, or must have stood very near it (*Gen.* xiv. 2, 3). Now this very district, which was described as “a garden of the Eternal, as the land of Egypt” (*ibid.* xiii. 10), of course for fertility, is now a mass of terrible desolation, from which all life has fled.

8. Again, Abraham, as well as Isaac, lived among the Philistines, whose territory must have extended beyond Kadesh as far as Shur (*ibid.* xx. 1). Now these two places are in the far south of Palestine in districts comprised in the time of Moses in the desert through which the Israelites had to pass. Shur is mentioned as the first station from the Red Sea towards Sinai (*Ex.* xv. 22), and Kadesh the last in the first portion of the journey of the Israelites, whence they sent spies to the land of Canaan (*Numb.* xiii. 26). These Philistines are not described as a nomadic tribe, encamped for a time, but as a settled people, which was governed by a king (*Gen.* xx. 2), with a regular court (*ibid.* 8) and a regular army (*ibid.* xxi. 22). The king spoke moreover like a sovereign of his country (*ibid.* 15). Nor was this country either barren or

waterless; for Isaac took refuge in the same country when there was a famine in the land of Canaan (*ibid. xxvi. 1.*), found there sufficient water for his large herds and flocks (*ibid. 18.*), and a very fertile soil, producing a hundredfold (*ibid. 12.*). A similar journey, with all their herds and flocks, was undertaken by Jacob and his family when they went down to Egypt (*ibid. xlvi. 6, xlvii. 1.*), and arrived there in safety with their beasts, without seeming to have suffered from want of water. But, what is still more extraordinary (*ibid. xiv.*), Amraphel, king of Shinar, with his confederates, before defeating the king of Sodom, found nations settled to the south of the Dead Sea, extended his conquest to El-Paran, which is by the desert (*ibid. 6.*), and which is the same through which the Israelites passed (*Numb. iii. 26.*), and to Kadesh (*Gen. xiv. 7.*), which is likewise one of the stations of the Israelites in the desert (*Numb. xiii. 26.*). Amraphel and his confederates must have found means to march an army through a desert country, and must have expected, in order to be worth the toil, to find much booty among populations settled in desert countries. This same desert of Paran was selected by Ishmael as his dwelling-place (*ibid. 21.*), and there he became the ancestor of twelve tribes, which were all established in the desert between Egypt and Assyria (*ibid. xxv. 18.*).

9. When we then come to the history of Moses, we observe that the priest of Midian, to whom he fled, must have been settled near enough to Horeb, in the Sinaitic peninsula—described by modern travellers as an exceedingly desert country—to have led the flock of his father-in-law to the mount, which was to become the scene of the law-giving. The district, therefore, inhabited by the priest of Midian could not have been destitute of water; and, indeed, Moses became acquainted with his future wife by the well (*Ex. ii. 15.*). Nor, indeed, could Horeb itself have been destitute of water, or Moses would not have led his flock there. The way

from Egypt to Midian must have been across Horeb; for God told Moses, that, in returning to Egypt, he would meet Aaron; and he actually met him on "the Mountain of God," that is, Horeb (*ibid. iv. 27*). Now this journey could not, then, have been so much dreaded as now; for Moses, without being commanded to do so, took his wife and children with him, found on the way, not *a*, but *the* lodging-place (*ibid. 24*), prepared to receive travellers, and after all took his family not with him to Egypt, but, on maturer consideration, sent them back again to his wife's father, without being escorted by him (*ibid. xviii. 2, 3*). This desert, therefore, could not, then, have worn the terrible aspect which it presents now.

10. We now come to an incident, to the consideration of which we invite the special attention of our readers. When Moses first appeared before Pharaoh he did not demand the liberation of his people, but only permission to go with them some distance into the desert, there to celebrate a festival to the Eternal (*ibid. ver. 1*). Now what motive could Pharaoh have had when he refused this request? At first it might have been his unwillingness to lose the temporary advantage he derived from the labour of the people (*ibid. 4, 5*). But subsequently he could not have been actuated by this motive; for he was ready to permit the able-bodied men—*i.e.*, the labouring population, to repair to the desert (*ibid. x. 11*), and at a still later period was willing to permit the whole population, even children to go forth provided they would leave behind their flocks and herds (*ibid. 2—4*). Now what object could Pharaoh have had in requiring them to leave behind their flocks and herds? It is evident he suspected the intention of the people to flee, and therefore wished to retain in his possession a pledge of their good faith. But why should the king have suspected their intention to flee, or considered the retention of their beasts as a hostage? Did he not know that the desert to

which they wished to repair opened no refuge for them? that it offered neither pasture for the cattle nor water for the people; that, in fact, the very multitude of the people and of their beasts was the best security that it could not be their intention to flee, as they must all have perished in that terrible wilderness? Pharaoh evidently did not take this view of the matter. Nay, more. After the Israelites had marched out, and he became sure that it was their intention to flee (ibid. xii. 5), he actually pursued them in order to prevent their flight, and consequently the possibility of an escape. Pharaoh, therefore, and his councillors must have considered the march of a people encumbered with so much cattle across the desert quite practicable. Now Pharaoh and his people, bordering as their land did upon the desert, must be presumed to have been acquainted with its nature and its resources. The geographical knowledge of the desert as it then was, which we lack, they must have possessed: and the whole proceedings of Pharaoh and his people in this matter are as good as the distinct deposition of a trustworthy eye-witness, that might have borne testimony to a matter of fact in general terms, without entering into any details. Suffice it, Pharaoh and his Egyptians, who must have excellent opportunities of knowing the desert, considered the march of Israel through it practicable, which could not have been the case had those regions then been what they are now.

11. In Exodus xvii. 8, we read that while Israel was at Rephidim, in the desert, Amalek came and fought with them. Now this attack was not in the front, but in the rear of the people (Deut. xxv. 18). The encounter, therefore, could not have been accidental, an undesigned incident, arising from Israel's marching to Sinai and meeting a tribe or a caravan of Amalekites coming from Sinai. Amalek must have followed Israel for the purpose of attacking them, and actually did so the moment he had overtaken them and fallen in with the

rear. Now, as this attack was premeditated, it is not likely that it was some small band of Amalekites that assailed Israel. That the assailing force was considerable, is quite evident from the uneasiness with which the attack filled Moses, and from the length of time the combat lasted (Exod. xvii. 12). Had the Amalekites only been few in number, we should not read — “And it came to pass when Moses lifted up his hand Israel prevailed, and when he let his hand sink Amalek prevailed.” Amalek, in that case, would never have had a chance of prevailing. But these very Amalekites lived a long way off, on the frontier of Palestine, as is evident from Numb. xxiv. 20, where Balaam, in the land of Moab, consequently on the very frontier of Canaan, is said to have seen Amalek; and again, in the same book, xiii. 29, Amalek is distinctly placed on the frontier of Canaan. A very considerable force of Amalekites must consequently have marched from the south of Canaan, all through the desert, to the Sinaitic peninsula, there to attack Israel. The Amalekite forces, therefore, just like the Egyptians, deemed an expedition through the desert practicable, and actually successfully engaged in it.

12. And as we are now speaking of Amalek’s attack on Israel, we may as well quote two other references to parts acted by his people. In 1 Sam. xv. 2, 3, we read that Samuel desired Saul to attack Amalek. Saul consequently assembled an army of 210,000 men (ver. 4), with which he defeated Amalek, from Havilah until “Shur, which is before Egypt” (ver. 7). Shur, we have seen before, was in the desert, close to the red Sea. Here we see a very large army engaged in a war carried on in the desert. It is true, that in modern times armies have marched through the desert, such as that which Bonaparte, during his Egyptian expedition, led from Cairo to Jaffa, and that which in 1840, after its defeat in Syria, retreated under Ibrahim Pashah to Egypt. But these armies were comparatively small bodies, carried on no warlike operations in the

desert, and marched as quickly as possible; and, after all, as known, their sufferings were very great. Never could Saul have ventured with such an army into the desert, had he not known that water was to be had there.

13. Again, in the same book, chapter xxvii. 8, we read that David was in the habit of invading the Geshurite, Gersite, and Amalekite, the inhabitants of the land, as far as Shur and Egypt. Here three nations are mentioned as the inhabitants of the land, now part and parcel of the desert. We might further have referred to the invasion of Judea by Shishak, King of Egypt, in the reign of Rehoboam, King of Judea—to the march of Pharaoh-Necho into Palestine—and to the various expeditions of Assyrian and Chaldean armies into Egypt—as proofs that in those remote days it was not considered quite impossible for large masses to pass through the desert. But we do not do so, as we do not know in how far these expeditions were, at least partly, carried on by sea, with the co-operation of the Phoenicians, whose power after the time of David rose higher and higher. We now return to the Pentateuch.

14. In Numb. xiv. 12, 13, Moses introduces the Egyptians speaking to “the inhabitants of this land,” evidently the land in which Moses then was. Now where was this land? Verse 26 of the preceding chapter gives the answer. Moses and Israel then were at Kadesh, in the desert of Paran. Some portion of this district, therefore, if not the whole, must have been inhabited. But the most decisive proof that at least parts of the desert were inhabited, and that Israel in their wanderings therein had intercourse with the nations settled there, we find in Deut. xxix. Moses before his death, is addressing his people. He reminds them of the covenant made by God with them, and warns them against the sin of idolatry which they saw practised in Egypt and elsewhere, making use of the following remarkable expressions (ver. 15, 16):

“For ye know how we have dwelt in the land of Egypt; and how we passed in the midst of the nations which ye passed by. And ye have seen the abominable things and their idols, wood and stone, silver and gold, which are with them.” In referring to the nations through whose midst Israel passed after their departure from Egypt, Moses could not have meant the nations inhabiting Canaan, for neither were the Israelites as yet there, nor did he enter it, as he died before the Jordan was passed. The nations, therefore, to which Moses referred, and which, the same as the Egyptians, worshipped idols, must have dwelt between Egypt and Canaan—tracts of land through which the Israelites had passed under the leadership of Moses, and which we now call the desert.

15. Having, as we believe, established the position with which we set out—viz., that the desert in the time of Moses was the permanent abode of several nations—the conclusion arrived at is, that the means of subsistence, especially water, for which there is no substitute, and which cannot be constantly imported for any large population, must then have existed. The question now arises—Do we find anywhere in the Mosaic account of Israel’s wanderings in the desert any direct reference to the existence of water? Unquestionably there exist at least two, one of which removes directly one of the Bishop’s chief objections, on which he lays uncommon stress, and to the statement of which he devotes no less than seventeen pages. Chapter xii. of the Bishop’s work, headed “The Sheep and Cattle of the Israelites in the Desert,” is taken up with quotations from modern travellers describing the awful barrenness of the desert, especially the Sinaitic peninsula, and with inferences therefrom, that it must have been impossible for the Israelites and their numerous flocks and herds to have subsisted for nearly a whole year under Mount Sinai.

16. That the Sinaitic peninsular now is at certain seasons of the year altogether waterless, is quite true; but it is equally

true that if the Sinai of Stanley be the Sinai of the Bible, this region was not waterless in the time of Moses. We have referred to this before, when we pointed out that the territory of the priest of Midian, in the vicinity of Horeb, in which Moses, after his flight from Egypt, took refuge, was not waterless, since he met his future wife at the well, and since he would not have led his flock to Horeb had the mountain been waterless: nor could the Israelites in this case have been commanded before Sinai to wash their clothes (Exod. xix. 10). But we need not have recourse to mere inferences. We are distinctly, although only incidentally, told in the Pentateuch that Mount Sinai had a brook. In Deut. ix. Moses, narrating the history of the golden calf, described in the 32nd chapter of Exodus, says: "And I took your sin, the calf, which ye had made, and burned it with fire; and I beat it, grinding it well until it was as small dust; and I cast the dust thereof into the brook that descendeth out of the mountain" (ver. 21). Now the mountain of which Moses spoke could only have been Mount Sinai, as the occurrence took place while the Israelites were encamped at the foot of this mountain. Nor could the brook referred to have been the dry bed of a torrent, such as are now found in considerable numbers in the Sinaitic peninsula, for, as Moses' purpose, when casting the dust of the calf into the brook, evidently was to prevent the people from possessing themselves of any part thereof, he would have failed in his object unless there had been water in the bed. To cast the dust on the dry bed of a brook would have been just the same as casting it on any other spot. Besides, in the parallel passage Ex. xxxii. 20, where the same incident is recorded, the word "water" (מַיִם) is substituted for "brook" (נַחַל) employed in Deut. which clearly shows, that when Moses spoke of the brook he meant the water, which he gave the children of Israel to drink, and not the dry bed.

17. Nor could this have been the only brook in the vicinity,

which is evident, from the necessity under which the sacred historian felt himself of describing it, as coming down from the mountain; and which, therefore, was not to be confounded with any of the other brooks existing there, but which had not their source on the mountain of God. Nor could this brook have been one of those torrents which in the winter rush through the *wadies*; for as the Israelites went out of Egypt in the month of April, they only arrived at Sinai in the third month after their departure, and, as Moses stayed on the mount forty consecutive days, the sin of the golden calf could not have taken place before the month of August, which is the height of summer, when, even in Palestine, most brooks are dried up. The brook, therefore, that descended from the mount, and into which Moses cast the dust of the golden calf, must have been an ever-flowing one, one of those which are called in the Bible נַחַל אִתְּן perennial brooks. And if there was one ever-flowing brook on Sinai, why not several more in the neighbouring mountains? The 'beds now empty, as all modern travellers record, are visible to this day, and these beds, we are told, are well filled in the winter season. If one perennial brook has been dried up since the time of Moses, why not many more? But wherever there is water in the desert, the Bishop himself admits there is no lack of vegetation—*i.e.*, fuel for man, and herbage for beasts.

18. The next distinct reference to water not supplied in a miraculous, but natural manner, is found in Numb. xxi. The verses 16, 17, and 18 are no doubt obscure; still it is clear, that the Israelites, in their distress for water, were directed by God to a spot where this liquid was to be found, and there a well was actually successfully sunk. If water was here successfully dug for and found, why not also in other encampments? Indeed, searches for this purpose are more than hinted at in Numb. x. In verses 29 to 32, we are informed that on the departure from Sinai, Moses urged Hobab the

Midianite to accompany Israel in their journeys, saying, "Forsake us not, I pray thee: for as much as thou knowest how we are to encamp in the desert, and thou mayest be to us instead of eyes." From this we see, that the service which Moses expected from Hobab was to act as Israel's guide, to which office he was evidently well suited by his acquaintance with the desert, which he no doubt possessed from having been so near it and perhaps spent all his life in the desert. Hobab, therefore, as the text shows, was to point out to the Israelites the spots suited for encampments — in other words, the spots containing natural or artificial gatherings of water.

19. Precisely the same idea is suggested by verse 33. Here we read: "And they (the Israelites) journeyed from the mount of the Eternal (Sinai) three days' journey, and the ark of the covenant of the Eternal went before them in the three days' journey to search out a resting-place for them." If this verse have any meaning at all, and if we supply the missing links in the general information here conveyed to us, but which, in accordance with the usual style of the sacred historian, are omitted, although understood, we must thus paraphrase it. When the time had come for the departure from Sinai, Moses commanded the people to break up the camp and to set slowly forward, so that the water of Sinai should always be within reach; while he ordered the Levites carrying the ark, and accompanied by guides, one and probably the chief of whom was Hobab, to hasten forward in search of another place fit for an encampment — *i.e.*, possessing a sufficient supply of water, and having succeeded in their object, to give notice thereof to the chief of the people, directing them to the new place of encampment, and meanwhile, like a quartermaster in an army, making all arrangements for the encampment against the arrival of the people. And if Moses found it requisite to use this precaution when setting out from

the encampment under Sinai, why not also, when necessary, in other encampments? Indeed, this seems to be hinted at in Numb. ix. Here we are told (verses 17—23) that the Israelites directed their marches according to the orders of Moses, received by him from God (23), and that, while in some places they only stopped one day, in others they sojourned for a whole year, in accordance with the signal given by the withdrawal of the cloud from the tabernacle. Although we are not distinctly told so, yet it stands to reason that these haltings so unequal in their duration, were not objectless. And what more satisfactory reason, in explanation of this inequality of duration, can be offered than its dependence on the supply of water yielded by the spot selected for encampment, and on the necessity under which the people found themselves to await the result of the explorations of the scouts or guides sent out to discover on the route traced out another fit place for encampment, or the completion of the arrangements made for supplying the wants of the people.

20. A few traces of such arrangements can be found; and these are the more valuable, as this evidence, too, is incidental, and therefore undesigned. In Deut. ii. we are made acquainted with the message sent by Moses, from the desert of Kedemoth, to Sihon, king of Heshbon. Moses, asking for permission to march through the country, says: "Thou (Sihon) shalt sell me food for money, that I may eat, and give me water for money, that I may drink: as the children of Esau who abide in Seir, and the Moabites who abide in Ar did unto me." Here Moses proposes arrangements to Sihon, which he distinctly said had been made with the children of Seir and certain Moabites, and which, so far as the children of Esau are concerned, are also alluded to in the 6th verse of the same chapter. Again, in chapter xxiii. 5, we are told that one of the reasons for the exclusion of the Ammonites and Moabites

from the assembly of the Eternal was, “Because they met you (the Israelites) not with bread and with water in the way when ye came forth out of Egypt.” Now the severity with which Moses resents this inhospitality on the part of the two nations leads us to the conclusion, that other nations had behaved quite differently. That the Israelites, in their march, met with other settled nations and had intercourse with them, we have shown before. When we, therefore, know that Moses actually proposed to Sihon an arrangement for the supply of water, which he had made with the two populations named by him, and blames a third and fourth for not having acted in a similar manner, is the supposition that similar arrangements were entered into with other nations not named, but of whose existence at the time we are assured, too bold a hypothesis?

21. That the Israelites, while in the desert, had friendly intercourse with other populations, is also clear from other passages. In Exod. xxx., from 22 to 34, are enumerated all kinds of spices, scarcely any of which are the product of Egypt. Most of them are found in Arabia, while cinnamon (ver. 23) must have been imported from India. Further, in xxvii. 20 of the same book, the Israelites were commanded to burn continually in the tabernacle clear olive oil. This oil was neither the production of Egypt nor of the desert. How could the Israelites have obtained these substances? They could not have taken them from the Egyptians when they marched out, for the sacred text informs us distinctly that they only despoiled the Egyptians of gold, silver, and garments. Nor is it likely, supposing that they themselves possessed these substances at the time of their departure, laden as they were with necessaries, they should have encumbered themselves with articles the use of which could not have been apparent to them. Indeed, we might just as well suppose that the labourers in Dorsetshire keep a store of these costly luxu-

ries, as that the oppressed and enslaved Israelites possessed these substances, then still more rare and expensive than now. These substances must, therefore, have been procured by the Israelites, while in the desert, by purchase or barter, from those trading nations settled near the gulf of Akabah, where Elath and Eziongeber were situated (Exod. ii. 8), and whence the fleet of Solomon sailed to Ophir; or from caravans going down with their goods to Egypt, such as that was to which Joseph was sold (Gen. xxxviii. 28).

22. Again, twice in Deuteronomy (viii. 4 and xxix. 4), did Moses, in his address to the people, refer to their garments and shoes as not having become worn out in the forty years that Israel was in the desert. In Deut. ii. 7, moreover, we are assured that the people lacked nothing during those forty years. Now we have no reason to suppose, that any other wants of the people, save those expressly mentioned, were supplied in a supernatural manner. And as the use of any garment for forty years, without being worn out would be one of the greatest miracles ever performed, especially when we consider that these garments would have had to grow with the growth of the children that either came out of Egypt or were subsequently born, we must presume that what Moses meant was, that the people possessed both the means and the opportunities of renewing the stock of their clothes, or procuring new ones whenever required. Now, no doubt, the wool of their sheep provided them with materials for their garments; but these materials had to be worked up, for which tools, generally of some metal, copper or iron, were required. These tools themselves were liable to break or to be worn out; they had to be repaired or renewed. How could this have been accomplished by a wandering population in the desert, without mines for procuring those metals, without furnaces, forges, or workshops for their manufacture? These tools therefore, must have been procured from other nations by

purchase or exchange for such natural productions as they possessed, and were yielded by their herds and flocks.

23. That they did trade while in the desert with surrounding nations and caravans, is hinted at in verse 7 of this second chapter, wherein Moses reminded Israel of his order to them to pay for all the necessaries that might be supplied to them by the children of Esau, which they were enabled to do; “for,” continued he, “the Eternal thy God hath blessed thee in all the works of thy hand,” evidently, as the context shows, during the forty years they were in the desert. Now wherein could this work of their hands have consisted? Clearly not in agriculture, for it is nowhere alluded to that they engaged in it while in the desert. It must, therefore, have consisted in some natural productions derived from their cattle and flocks, or articles which are bought of one people and sold to another; for had the Israelites limited themselves to barter or trade among themselves, their goods would only have changed hands, and many of their wants, which, as we have shown, could only have been provided from without, would not have been supplied; nor would their means—silver is mentioned in the preceding verse—have increased to enable them to buy food and water, nor could it have been said that the Eternal blessed them in the work of their hands. The whole tenor of the passage, therefore, compels us to admit that the Israelites, while in the desert, had intercourse with other nations. Indeed, such an instance of intercourse, at least with one nation, has received a sad notoriety in the history of these wanderings. Chapter xxv. of Numbers records the sinful intimacy between Israel, while at Shittim, and the daughters of Moab and Midian. This intercourse is alluded to on account of the important and sad consequences which it produced. But if the Israelites had intercourse with two nations, why not with some more not especially mentioned, because it was not marked by any particular feature that might have called for a special record.

24. But if the desert was then the abode of numerous tribes, and was not so destitute of water as we now see it, why did Moses call it a “waste, howling wilderness?” And why did Jeremiah (ii. 6) describe Israel’s wanderings as a march “through the wilderness, through a land of desert and pits, through a land of drought and the shadow of death — through a land that no man passed through, where no man dwelleth?”

25. Besides the two passages quoted before, and in which the desert through which the Israelites passed is designated as terrible and destitute of springs or brooks, there are others in the Pentateuch of similar import. Such are Deut. i. 19 and vii. 15, and perhaps some more. But these passages only establish what we stated at the very outset of our discussion — viz., that there were parts of the desert barren in themselves, infested by reptiles, waterless, and therefore in general shunned by travellers, and dreaded by them. While marching through these parts, the Israelites, no doubt, suffered terribly; and had their thirst, whilst therein, not been once or twice slacked in a supernatural manner (Deut. viii. 15), they would undoubtedly have perished. That both Moses and Jeremiah applied their descriptions of the desert, commented upon by the Bishop, not to the whole, but only to parts thereof, is not only clear from the testimony borne by the former to the existence of whole populations settled in the desert, as shown by us before, but also by the very passages themselves so confidently appealed to by the Bishop.

26. When Moses, in Deut. i. 19, characterises the desert as fearful, he distinctly marks its limits. For he says — “And when we journeyed from Horeb, we went through all that great and fearful desert which ye saw by the way of the mountain of the Amorites, as the Eternal our God commanded us; and we came to Kadesh Barnea.” The fearful desert, therefore, of which Moses spoke commenced only after Israel

had quitted Horeb, and did not extend beyond Kadesh Barnea. Now what was the distance? Less than eleven days' journey, although we do not know by how many days' journey less. This is evident from Deut. i. 2. Here we are told that there were "eleven days' journey from Horeb by the way of Mount Seir unto Kadesh Barnea." Now as the desert designated by Moses as "great and fearful" did not commence at Horeb, but only after the Israelites had departed from Horeb, it must have been passable in less than eleven days; let us say in ten days. But encumbered as the Israelites were, and numerous as must have been the children, a day's journey could not have exceeded ten miles, and was perhaps only five miles. That the latter estimate is nearer the truth than the former, may be inferred from Deut. viii. 4, where we are told that the feet of the Israelites did not swell, or rather were not blistered, as is the case when persons not used to walking walk any unusual distance. The utmost extent of this fearful desert, therefore, could only have been one hundred miles — no doubt large enough for any population, deprived of special Divine assistance, to perish. Yet was this special Divine interposition not intended to avert from the multitude the natural unavoidable painful consequences which the march through such inhospitable, sun-parched regions must have entailed. While, therefore, Moses with justice characterised this desert as terrible and infested with reptiles, and as one which entailed upon the Israelites extraordinary hardships, he could yet point to the safe passage through it, as an evident proof of the special Providence that watched over Israel, and which manifested itself in their greatest distress by bringing forth water from the very flint (ibid. viii. 15). But what was a tract of one hundred miles to the immense extent of desert stretching between Egypt and Palestine, and then again far, far away to the east of the Mediterranean? And what is the comparatively short time which they spent therin (the

Israelites, undoubtedly hastened to get out as soon as possible from the howling wilderness) to the forty years which they passed in the desert?

27. A close analysis of Jer. ii. 6 gives a similar result, and, moreover, offers a hint on some artificial means employed for providing water in this sterile region. The passage, our readers will recollect, runs thus: "Neither said they (Israel) Where is the Lord that brought us up out of Egypt, that led us through the wilderness, through a land of desert and pits, through a land of drought, and the shadow of death, through a land that no man passed through, where no man dwelleth?" Now, that the prophet did not mean his words to be taken strictly to the letter, and to be extended to the whole desert, is quite clear from the concluding phrase, "through a land that no man passed through, where no man dwelleth." For the same prophet, in the very commencement of the verse, says, "who led us through the desert." There consequently was a people which had passed through it. The prophet, moreover, must have known that various tribes lived in the desert. Besides, the same prophet repeatedly refers to the inhabitants of the desert, as ix. 25, and xxv. 24. Had he spoken of the whole desert, he could not have said, "where no man dwelleth." Jeremiah, therefore, could only here have characterised like Moses a certain, or perhaps certain parts of the desert. Indeed, he seems to say as much himself; for he qualifies the general term "through the wilderness" as too wide by some others which narrow it, and define it more clearly; for he goes on to say, "through a land of desert and pits, through a land of drought and of the shadow of death," which in the original is still more plain, as the first of the qualifying expressions used is עֲרָבָה (*arabah*), which frequently designates a certain portion of the desert, extending from the Dead Sea to the gulf of Akaba. Whether, therefore, Jeremiah referred to the same region of which Moses

spoke, or to some other, it was only a part, and not the whole of the desert to which he alludes. In either case, our remarks are as applicable to the one as to the other.

28. But if the first of the qualifying words (**ערְבָּה** *arubah*—desert) is significant, the second characteristic, “and pits,” is truly striking. Pits are hollows dug in the ground by human labour. Why should men have dug pits in such a dreadful wilderness, and what purpose could they have served there? We can only imagine one of two. The pits were either dug by hunters for the purpose of entrapping therein wild beasts, or by caravans or individuals who, for some purpose unknown to us, had occasionally to repair to this desert, and perhaps to traverse it, and who laid up in these pits reserves of water for the supply of their wants. In the latter case, they were probably carefully covered, in order to prevent the evaporation of the fluid, and to hide it from strangers. It is, however, not likely that these pits were the work of hunters, for in the first place we nowhere read in the Pentateuch of the Israelites having in the desert been assailed by wild beasts. Had this been the case, it would undoubtedly have been either expressly mentioned, in the same way as Moses speaks of the bites inflicted by fiery serpents (Numb. xxi. 6), or incidentally alluded to the same, as he referred to the existence of reptiles (Deut. viii. 15). It is, therefore, only reasonable to suppose that there were no wild beasts in the desert. Further, hunters would hardly have pursued wild beasts in regions in which they could not inflict any injury either upon man or beast, that did not exist there; and in which hunting, entrapping, or digging, would have been labours entailing most terrible hardships, by reason of the want of all sustenance and water; and all this apart from the difficulty involved in the supposition that wild beasts, which require at least as much water as cattle, could have subsisted in those sterile tracts of land. We are, therefore, forced to the conclusion that these

pits were reservoirs, serving to collect the water in the rainy season for the necessities of travellers who might be compelled to traverse these regions.

29. Now in this view we are confirmed by the very expression rendered “pits” in the passage under consideration. It is in Hebrew **שׁוֹקָה**. Without enquiring into the etymology, which fully bears out the rendering of the Anglican version, we shall show, by parallel passages, that this term was synonymous with “well,” and that this pit was covered over, as wells frequently were. To prove the former, we refer to Prov. xxiii. 27. The sacred writer cautions young men against intimacy with unprincipled women, and makes use of the phrase—

—בַּיִם שׁוֹקָה עַמְקָה זוֹנָה וּבְאָרֶץ אֶרְזָה נָכְרִיה—

For a deep *pit* (**שׁוֹקָה**) is a harlot;

And a narrow *well* (**בְּאָרֶץ**) an alien woman.

30. The parallelism in the two hemistichs of this verse is self-evident, since “a deep pit” and “a narrow well” are clearly as synonymous as “a harlot” and “alien woman” (let it be borne in mind that harlots were generally foreigners, prostitution among Israelites being strictly forbidden). If, therefore, **בְּאָרֶץ** (well) was a gathering of water, so must have been **שׁוֹקָה**, the pit spoken of by the sacred penman in Proverbs, and consequently also in Jeremiah. That these reservoirs were covered over, no doubt, as said before, to prevent evaporation, and to keep them secret, may be inferred from Jeremiah xviii. 20 and 22. The prophet, complaining of the enmity of the people to him, and their scheming to overcome him by cunning devices, continues (ver. 20): “For they have digged a pit (**שׁוֹקָה**) for my soul.” Now had this been an open pit, visible to every one, and consequently easily avoided, the simile would not at all have been applicable. This is still more evident from verse 22, where the prophet says: “For they have digged a pit (**שׁוֹקָה**) to take me, and hid snares for my feet.” Here, again, “hid” is parallel with “digged,” and

snares" with "pit," which explain each other, and clearly show that the figurative pit which the prophet had in mind was as little perceived as are the material snares laid to entrap unwary creatures.

31. That such gatherings of water, whether artificial or natural, were not unknown in the desert, is clear from Gen. xxi. 19, and xxxvii. 22 and 24. In chap. xxi. we are informed of the expulsion of Hagar and her son from the house of Abraham, and her distress in the desert for want of water. The sacred writer then continues (ver. 19): "And God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water." Now it is not said that this well was called forth miraculously, but only that her eyes were opened, so that she saw what had existed previously, but was not perceived by her. The well, therefore, must have been covered artificially, as were many others in Syria (Gen. xxix. 2, 3). In Gen. xxxvii. we read an account of the conduct of the sons of Jacob towards their brother Joseph, whom they sold into slavery. Now in verse 22 we are made acquainted with Reuben's advice to his brethren to cast Joseph "into the pit which is in the desert;" and in the following verse we are informed "the pit was empty —there was no water in it." This clearly shows what this pit in the desert was intended for. It was intended to serve as a reservoir, but happened to be empty at the time when the occurrence took place. These pits were indeed only an adaptation and enlargement of domestic cisterns to uninhabited spots. Here, therefore, we see distinct traces of one of the means employed in those primæval times for laying in stores of water in the desert: and if we consider that the Israelites, in their journeys, were accompanied at least by one individual perfectly well acquainted with those regions and their resources, and consequently with those hidden reservoirs, which undoubtedly were on purpose kept secret from the uninitiated, and that the slowness of the marches and the length of time the people frequently remained in one and the same camp, permitted Moses to have

such pits dug on purpose before the setting in of the rainy season in those regions, through which he knew he would have to pass, we can, at least to a limited extent, understand how it was that direct divine interposition for the supply of water was so rarely required.

32. That the construction of such artificial reservoirs must have been well known to the Israelites, is quite clear from Exod. vii. 19. Here Moses was commanded to tell Aaron: "Take thy staff and stretch out thy hands upon the waters of Egypt, upon their streams, upon their rivers, and upon their ponds, and upon all their gatherings of water, that they may become blood." As Egypt never had more than one single river—the Nile—all those pieces of water enumerated here must have been artificial reservoirs fed by the Nile, serving either the purpose of irrigation or of supplying drinking water. Indeed, everyone is acquainted with the system of canals which existed in Egypt in primeval times, and has heard of that wonderful lake, Moeris, an artificial reservoir of an immense size, which served to receive the super-abundance of the Nile. With such examples before the eye of the Israelites, and with ample leisure on their hands—with complete local knowledge, and under the leadership of such a man as Moses, at the height of Egypt's science, and undoubtedly initiated in Egypt's lore, it would indeed have been strange should the water supply for such a multitude have been left by him entirely to chance or miracle. That the Egyptians must have constructed such a system of reservoirs, at least in one spot of the desert, is quite clear, from the circumstance referred to by Stanley, that they possessed copper mines, and indeed, a whole mining district on the northern coast of the Red Sea. Now, although it is most probable that this mining population drew its supplies of food from Egypt, yet it would have been all but impossible to send them also the necessary supply of water across the Red Sea. Artificial provisions of the nature referred to must, therefore,

have been made in the vicinity of the mines for the supply of this want. There exists, moreover, historical evidence to show, that at least one population, inhabiting a territory close to the desert, if not in the desert itself, was in possession of secret reservoirs of water. Dr. Kalisch, in his commentary on Gen. xxv. 13, gives an abstract of the history of the Nabatheans, whose capital was Petra. Having described the situation of the city, he continues: "In the most sterile part of the dreary desert, they (the Nabatheans) dug vast subterranean waterreservoirs with very narrow mouths, which could easily be stopped and concealed, while the interior gradually widened to the dimensions of a hundred square feet. Into these regions they marched at the approach of their enemies, who, excruciated by thirst, either suffered immense losses or hastened to return."

33. Closely connected with the views here propounded, is a peculiar class of individuals referred to in the Pentateuch, and whose occupation is evidently represented as the most menial. Deut. xxix. 9 and 10 enumerates all the classes of which the Israelitish population was then composed. As the highest class with which the enumeration commences are mentioned "the heads of your tribes," and as the lowest, concluding the specification, is named "the drawer of thy water." Now the drawing of water was anciently neither a menial occupation nor performed by a special class. Rebecca, of the distinguished family of Abraham, went herself to the well to draw water, and even drew water for the camels of Eliezer (Gen. xxiv. 19). Jacob and Moses drew water from wells, instead of the damsels, upon whom the labour devolved (ibid. xxix. 10; Exod. ii. 17). Why, therefore, should the Israelites, while in the desert, have required a special class for the performance of this task, which, indeed, would have more appropriately devolved upon each family? And why should this task have been so laborious as only to be resorted to by, or perhaps imposed upon, individuals forming the lowest class among the people (Josh. ix. 21),

and to be placed on a level with “hewers of wood,” whose work has at all times been very laborious? Evidently, because the exceptional position which the Israelites then occupied, and the peculiar geographical features presented by the desert, required a special organisation for the supply of this necessary, and which having, under a scorching sun, to be drawn from deep hollows, the covering of which had to be removed, and again replaced, and which had occasionally to be transported long distances, must have been exceedingly fatiguing, still more so than the cutting of trees or gathering of fire-wood.

THE SHEEP AND CATTLE OF THE ISRAELITES IN THE DESERT (Chap. xii.).

34. As the existence of water in the desert goes hand in hand with the existence of vegetation, and consequently of wood, as indeed, significantly enough, expressed by Moses in ranking as a class, “hewers of wood” next before that of drawers of water, it will not be out of place to say a few words on what we have termed “the wood question.”

35. This question is more pointedly put in the chapter referred to, where the Bishop expatiates upon the impossibility of the Israelites having obtained under Sinai “supplies of fuel for the daily cooking necessities of a population like that of London, but also for relief against the piercing cold of the winter season.” Now whether the cooking necessities of a hardy population, used in Egypt to live, partly at least, upon raw vegetables (Numb. xi. 5), and encamped in the open, bracing air of the desert, were so great as those of a refined, and upon the whole, delicate and sickly population, as that of London, which cannot well digest any food unless previously thoroughly cooked, may well be doubted. The Israelites had no bread (Deut. xxix. 5), and, in the absence of all cereals, had no pastry to bake. They, like all inhabitants of warm climates, probably partook but sparingly of flesh meat, and consequently chiefly subsisted on manna,

which required but little cooking, since it melted when the sun shone upon it, and on milk, cheese, and clouted milk, which required no cooking whatever. They further had an all but unlimited supply of a species of fuel not used by us in Europe, but which is common enough in the East to this day, and which is referred to in the Bible, although the Bishop makes no mention of it. We allude to animal excrements, which, when dry, are used in the East as fuel. That it was known to the Israelites, and used at least for baking bread, is evident from Ezek. iv.15. There is, therefore, ample warrant to assume that the Israelites made use of this fuel in the desert.

36. Further, as Sinai was neither destitute of water nor of herbage, there is sufficient reason to believe that there existed also trees. We have further seen, that there existed a special organisation for hewing trees (the Hebrew יָד means both wood and tree), and these hewers of wood, like the drawers of water, no doubt ranged about in search of wood, which it was their business to transport to the camp.

37. We do not know what the temperature is in the winter under Sinai; but the Israelites had had a whole summer to prepare themselves for the winter. Moses, at least, who had lived for many years in the neighbouring Midian, must have been well acquainted with the climate of Horeb. The Israelites might have sent their cattle to winter with the cattle of Midian or to some more genial regions in the desert, with which Moses, and especially Hobab, were acquainted. The Israelites themselves might have been encamped in the valleys around Sinai, where the mountains protected them from the piercing blast, and, being under canvass, were sufficiently protected from the cold. The winter, moreover, which they spent under Sinai, might have been providentially mild.

38. We have argued on the supposition, that the winters in the Sinaitic peninsula were then habitually as cold as they are represented now to be. But we have seen that since then the peninsula, as well as the desert in general, must have under-

gone considerable changes, and the change of climate, in consequence of other changes, may have been one of them. Those who are acquainted with the present barrenness of the Lebanon, once thickly covered with stately cedars—with the sterility of several parts in Palestine, once most productive and populous—and with that of at least a part of the land of Goshen, undoubtedly lying between the Nile and the Red Sea, styled by Pharaoh “the best of the land,” will admit that there have been in those regions unfavourable influences at work which are not sufficiently known, and which, even as they have to this day prevented the growth of fresh cedars on Lebanon, so they may have prevented the fresh growth of vegetation, and especially of trees, in Sinai, after having once been stripped of them.

39. We now come to the consideration of the second proposition referred to before (G. g. 3), and which exposes the difficulty involved in the supposition that the millions of Israel marched out on one and the same day from Rameses, accompanied by their herds and flocks, the latter not trampling down the scanty pasturage that might have been found, and the former never being short of that large number of beasts and birds which they are supposed to have required for sacrifices.

40. But is this supposition borne out by the account of the exodus left on record by the sacred writer? The Bishop, no doubt, in making these statements, believed that they were fully justified by the existing data. But the data quoted by him are not the only ones in the Bible. There are others in existence which partly supplement those cited by him, partly modify, and partly explain them. And we feel confident that an enquirer who shall base his researches, not upon a few, but the whole body of these data, will arrive at the conclusion, that the Bishop's inferences, which we have formulated in this second proposition, are altogether untenable. True, the data omitted by the Bishop, and to which we are going to refer,

are indirect and incidental. But for this reason, as explained before, because they are undesigned, they are the more trustworthy.

41. But, before we proceed, it will be well to remind our readers of the principle laid down by us before, that the object of the author of the Pentateuch was not to write the history of Israel, but the history of the religious idea, as it arose since the patriarchs, developed itself, and received shape and consistency through the law given by Moses; and that the general events, as well as Israel's relation to other populations, are only adverted to in as far as they are connected with the history of this religious idea, and throw light on it.

42. Now, not only in the account of the exodus, but in the whole Pentateuch, it is peculiar to the historian to omit incidents immaterial to his immediate purpose, although they may be easily imagined; and yet to use phrases which necessarily imply them, or subsequently to make allusion to them, as though distinctly expressed. Thus, in Gen. iv. 8, we are made acquainted with Abel's death by the hand of his brother in these words—"And Cain said to Abel his brother . . . And it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him." Now what did Cain say to his brother to induce him to accompany him to the field? This is left out by the historian, as immaterial to his purpose; his object only having been to acquaint posterity with Cain's deceitfulness and horrible crime. This object the narrative attains, and the record of the conversation between the deceiver and the deceived was, therefore, unnecessary, and consequently omitted; and yet the phrase employed by the sacred writer is **וַיֹּאמֶר קַיּוֹן אֶל הַבָּل אֲחִיו**, "And Cain said to Abel his brother," as rendered by Benisch, although the Anglican version translates, against all analogy, "And Cain talked with Abel his brother."

43. Further, when in Gen. xlvi. 21, Joseph's brethren reproach themselves with the crime committed by them when

they sold their brother into slavery—"They said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the distress of his soul, when he implored us, and we would not hear." We may easily imagine that Joseph implored his brethren not to sell him. Yet not a word of this is said in the account of this iniquitous transaction, as narrated in chap. xxxvii. of the same book. Had we not the express evidence of the sacred writer incidentally referred to in chap. xl. 11, to the contrary, we might have concluded from chap. xxxvii. that Joseph, in the whole transaction, remained perfectly passive, not making the slightest attempt to avert his sad fate. It is evident that, since Joseph's representations exercised no influence on the wicked determination of his brothers, the historian did not deem it requisite to allude to them at the time.

44. The same characteristic in the style of the sacred writer marks the account of the exodus, and the journeys of Israel in the desert. Thus, in Ex. xix. 12, the Israelites are reported to have said to Moses—"Is not this the word that we spoke unto thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone that we may serve Egypt?" But in the narrative of the intercourse of Moses with the people in Egypt, no allusion whatever is found to any representation of the kind having been made by Israel to their deliverer. Again, in ver. 15 of the same chapter, God is introduced addressing Moses—"Wherefore criest thou unto me?" Now, although we can easily imagine that Moses, in his distress, addressed himself to God in prayer, yet we are nowhere told so. We have simply to infer this from God's answer to his prayer. Again, in Exodus xviii. 2, we are informed that Jethro, in company with his daughter and her two sons, paid a visit to Moses, bringing back to him his wife, "after his having sent her away." Thus we learn, quite incidentally, what we are nowhere expressly told.

45. Thus, were we to form our ideas of the position of the

Israelites in Egypt exclusively from the direct evidences in Exodus, without consulting incidental references in the same book, and allusions to the same subject in other books of the Bible, we should judge that the people, while in Egypt, lived in the land of Goshen quite separated from the Egyptians; and were all of them shepherds; that none of them quitted the country until they departed under Moses; never intermingled with the Egyptians, except in so far as they were compelled to do so by their bondage; and never deserted the patriarchal institutions and traditions brought down with them into Egypt. It is a fact, that the sacred writer never reproaches them with the desertion of the ancestral institutions, and that, when they are oppressed, they are not represented to have implored the aid of any false gods (Ex. ii. 23). And yet, when we collect the various hints scattered all over the Bible, and join together these *disjecta membra*, quite a different picture of the position of Israel during their stay in Egypt is presented. Not that these indirect data contradict the direct ones, but that they supplement, complete, and modify them, and together convey to us a correct idea of the condition of Israel during this eventful period.

46. Thus, from Ex. iii. 22, it is clear that, in the time of Moses, either Egyptians lived in Goshen or Israelites in Egypt, or more probably Egyptians in Goshen and Israelites in Egypt. For in the passage referred to we are incidentally told that Israelites had Egyptian neighbours, and even Egyptian inmates in their houses. Incidentally, this intermingling is also evident from the circumstance that Pharaoh's daughter came to wash herself in a part of the river which could not have been far from the residence of Moses' parents, since his sister stood close by, and was able to bring his mother to the princess while she was waiting (ibid. ii. 7, 8, 9). That detachments of Israelites, at least once, marched out of Goshen, and undertook an unsuccessful expedition against the Philistines of Gath, is

evident from 1 Chron. vii. 21, where we read—"And Zabad his (Ephraim's) son, and Shuthelah his son, and Ezer, and Elead, whom the men of Gath that were born in that land slew, because they came down to take away their cattle." That about the same time, other Israelites had friendly intercourse with the population of Canaan and an adjoining territory, is evident from the 24th verse of the same chapter, and from 1 Chron. iv. 22 and 23; for in the former we read that a daughter of Ephraim built three cities, two of which were Lower and Upper Beth Horon, several times mentioned in the Bible, as in Josh. xvi. 5, and xxi. 22; and in the latter we are informed that sons of Shelah, consequently grandsons of Judah, "owned (property,) in Moab;" and further, that "these were the potters, and those that dwelt among plants and hedges" (*i. e.*—were gardeners) and that "there they dwelt with the king for his work." Now this king could be no other than the king of the country spoken of; that is, Moab. That not all Israelites in Egypt were shepherds, is evident from the 21st verse of chapter iv. of 1 Chron. For therein we are informed that the grandsons of Shelah were of "the families of the house of them that wrought fine linen." This is incidentally confirmed by the skill displayed in the desert in the weaving of the curtains of the tabernacle. It deserves, further, to be noticed that the chief artificer engaged in the construction of the tabernacle and its furniture, was Bezaleel of the tribe of Judah (Ex. xxxi. 2), precisely the tribe which in Chronicles is represented to have given birth to all kinds of mechanics and artificers (iv. 14 and 23). That many Israelites in Egypt, if not all, deserted the worship of their fathers and were reproved for it by God, is quite evident from Ezekiel xx. In this chapter, the prophet reproaches Israel with their backslidings, taking a kind of retrospect, which commences with their sojourn in Egypt. The prophet says (ver. 4—8)—"Cause them (Israel) to know the abomination of their fathers . . .

In the day I lifted up my hand unto them, to bring them forth of the land of Egypt . . . Then said I unto them, Cast ye away every man the abomination of his eyes, and defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt . . . But they rebelled against me . . . they did not every man cast away the abominations of their own eyes, neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt." The existence of a strong propensity to idolatry incidentally receives confirmation from the readiness of the people to worship the golden calf made by Aaron, the prototype of which evidently was the ox, Apis, with whose worship they must have been familiar in Egypt.

47. Nor did they altogether keep from intermarrying with the Egyptians. In this, indeed, Joseph had set them an example; and incidentally we learn from Leviticus xxiv. 10, that there was amidst the Israelites "the son of an Israelitish woman who was the son of an Egyptian man." In the same way we learn from 1 Chronicles iv. 18, that a descendant of Judah, Mared, was married to Bethiah, a daughter of Pharaoh. But not only did they intermarry with Egyptians, there are also traces that matrimonial alliances were entered into during this period with Syrians. Manasseh, at least, had a Syrian concubine (1 Chron. vii. 14).

48. In the same way, were we to confine our view only to one set of data, we should judge that on the day the Israelites went out from Egypt they were all assembled in one and the same city—Rameses; that they marched out in one single host, accompanied by their herds and flocks; that this immense multitude, in one and the same body, marched on to Sinai, and in fact, through the whole wilderness; that they practised all the commandments given them, except those which had reference to the Land of Promise; and that, while in the desert, they were guilty of no other sins except those recorded in the Pentateuch—in fact, that no other incidents connected with the exodus took place except those mentioned. Yet how

greatly are these views modified by incidental references, which we are going to quote.

49. That numbers of Israelites were congregated in and about Rameses at the time of the departure is most probable, since this was one of the cities which they were compelled to build (Exod. i. 11). That Pharaoh at the time held his court there, and that it was, consequently, for the time the residence of Moses and Aaron, and the heads of the people who acted in concert with them (Exod. iv. 29—31), is clear from the rapidity with which the events recorded in the 11th and 12th chapters of Exodus succeeded each other. Had the chiefs of the people stayed any distance from Moses, and Moses any distance from the court, Pharaoh's messengers could not have reached Moses and Aaron on the very night (*ibid.* xii. 31) on which the first-born of Egypt were smitten, and which took place at midnight; nor could Moses and Aaron have placed themselves so quickly in communication with the multitude that marched out in the morning. That, however, all the Israelites were not assembled at Rameses, round Moses and Aaron, and the chiefs, at the departure, but simultaneously on one and the same day, fixed upon before, entered on their march out of Egypt from their various quarters, where they met organised in divers bodies, all converging towards the head of the Red Sea,—is more than hinted at by the repetition six times within thirteen verses (Exod. xiii. 39—51) openly or impliedly, that it was the land of Egypt, not Rameses, whence the Israelites departed, and that they did not march out in one body, but in several.

50. Of the six passages to which we refer, as a proof that, although Israel's head-quarters at the time were at Rameses, as implied by the statement, “And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth,” and that, therefore the historian was justified in speaking of the departure of “the children of Israel,” when he meant their principal men or their representatives, undoubtedly accompanied by a vast multitude—we quote

verse 39 as the most decisive: “And they (the Israelites) baked unleaven cakes out of the dough which they brought forth out of Egypt, for it was not leaven; because they were *driven out of Egypt*, and could not tarry.” Now this driving out of the Israelites by the Egyptians (ver. 33) could only refer to the Egyptians of the capital, who urged Israel’s departure by the command of Pharaoh (verses 30, 31), and yet we are told that the Israelites were driven out, not from Rameses, whence they set out, but from Egypt. Rameses, therefore, in verse 37, must stand for Egypt, and this reasoning is not affected whether Rameses was the name of a city only or of the whole district in which the city stood (Genesis xlvi. 11).

51. In fact, the attentive reader of this chapter will find that the writer, by a common figure of speech, employs indiscriminately the name of Egypt when he only means the city in which the king then held his court, and *vice versa*. This frequent use of the whole for a part, and a part for the whole, we have seen, marks the style of the sacred writer also in other analogous designations, as shown before, when we proved that the term “elders” was often identical in the mind of the sacred writer with “congregation,” and “congregation” with “elders.” That the Israelites marched out in several bodies, and not in one, as undoubtedly must have been the case had such a vast multitude quitted one city in one and the same day, is evident from verses 41 and 51 of Exod. xii.; for in the 41st verse we read, “The self-same day it came to pass that *all the hosts* of the Eternal went out from the land of Egypt.” And again, in verse 51, “And it came to pass the self-same day, that the Eternal did bring out the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt by *their hosts*.” That the Hebrew נָצְרָא, in both these instances, means duly appointed organised bodies, although not necessarily armies, as rendered in the Anglican version, we have shown before (see *Philological Group*, 9).

52. That the Israelites, in their passage through the desert,

did not march in one compact body, as the Bishop represents it, we have shown before, by a reference to Numb. x. 33, and this is also incidentally proved by Deut. xxv. 18, where Moses told Israel: “Amalek smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee.” Had the people marched in one compact mass, those that were feeble would not have been left behind, but would have been placed in the centre, while a body of valiant men would have brought up the rear.

53. That the Israelites under Sinai were not encamped in one spot, may be inferred from a singular expression employed by Moses, when interceding for Israel, after the commission of the sin with the golden calf. God having threatened to destroy the people, Moses prays: “Wherefore should the Egyptians speak and say, For evil did he bring them out, to slay them (Israel) in the *mountains*, and to consume them from the face of the ground?” To what *mountains* did Moses refer? This is explained in the next phrase, by “the face of the ground,” where, it is to be observed, **אֶרֶץ מָה** (ground), and not **אֶרֶץ אָרֶץ** (earth) is used. The reference, consequently, in accordance with the general usage of the word, is a special one, limited to the ground then occupied by the Israelites, which, in the preceding parallel passage or hemistich, is said to consist of “the mountains”—plural, not in singular—when there was only one mountain, with which we had previously been made acquainted, and which was Mount Sinai. The Israelites, therefore, were then not only encamped under Sinai, where no doubt the head quarters were, Moses and the elders of the people being there, but scattered over the various mountains far and wide in the Sinaitic peninsula, as the necessities of the people required.

54. Nor were the derelictions of Israel, such as the worship of the golden calf, or their joining in the service of Baal-Peor (Numb. xxv. 3) their only sins of idolatry while in the desert. Some of them, at least, worshipped idols, which is not even

incidentally alluded to in the Pentateuch; for Amos, referring to the sacrifices offered by Israel in the desert, continues (v. 26): “But ye [Israel in the desert] have borne the tabernacle of your Moloch and Chiun your images, the star of your god made to yourselves.” Here, as clearly as words can announce it, the prophet assures us that Israel, while in the desert, carried along with them certain idols, and their paraphernalia not obtained from others, but made by themselves, which could only have been for worship.

55. That the Israelites, while in the desert, with the knowledge of Moses, did not perform some of the commandments of God, can easily be shown. And first, with reference to sacrifices. The whole of Leviticus is nearly taken up with instructions concerning sacrifices; yet in Deut. xii., Moses, speaking of the sacrifices to be brought by the Israelites when in the Promised Land, contrasting their future condition with their actual state in the desert, continues (ver. 8, 9): “Ye shall not do after all the things that we do here this day, every man *whatsoever is right in his own eyes*. For ye are not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance which the Eternal your God giveth you.” It is clear, then, that the Israelites, despite the commandments given them, either did not offer any sacrifices at all, or, when offering, were not guided by the instructions laid down. Now, it must be observed, that Moses does not speak in a reproachful tone, upbraiding Israel for their disobedience, but merely mentions it as a matter of fact. This neglect of an express command is also incidentally referred to by Jeremiah, who goes a step further, conveying to us the information that the commandments concerning sacrifices were not intended to be strictly kept by Israel while in the desert, and, indeed, were worthless unless accompanied by upright walking in the ways of God, and in any case could not be compared in importance to the practice of virtue; for the prophet, in chap. vii., reproaching Israel with their disobedience to the laws of morality,

continues (ver. 22) : “ For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices.”

56. And next, with reference to another most important commandment, so important indeed as to have at all times been considered as the chief pillar upon which the religion of Moses rests, the performance of which is repeatedly enjoined in the Pentateuch, and the neglect of which entailed various and severe disabilities, both temporal and spiritual. We refer to the law of circumcision. Did we not possess the Book of Joshua, we should have firmly believed that whatever other commandments the Israelites might have transgressed in the desert, circumcision was strictly practised, especially when it is considered that Moses himself was so severely punished for his neglect in this matter (Exod. iv. 24, 25); and yet we learn distinctly from Joshua, that such was not the case, for in chap. v., 5 we read: “ Now all the people that came out [of Egypt] were circumcised; but all the people that were born in the wilderness, by the way as they came forth out of Egypt, them they had not circumcised.” And again, in verse 7, “ And their children, whom He [God] raised up in their stead, them Joshua circumcised, because they had not circumcised them by the way;” yet not a word of this neglect in the desert of a most sacred command is breathed in the Pentateuch, nor even an incidental allusion made to it.

57. The universal neglect of so important a commandment for so long a period could not have taken place without Moses’ consent. The only reason that can be imagined for this neglect, is the peculiar position in which the Israelites were then placed. Being migratory, not knowing beforehand when the camp would be broken up, or how long they would stay in any place and be exposed to all kinds of hardships, Moses, by the direction of God, probably found it inexpedient to expose the infants to the dangers that under these exceptional circumstances would have threatened their lives. He, consequently, deemed it right

to suspend this law for a time, however paramount its general importance. We are, therefore, justified in concluding that even as the laws of sacrifices and circumcision, owing to the peculiar circumstances in which Israel were then placed, were temporarily suspended, so were other laws, the observance of of which was either then altogether impracticable, or in their position productive of great inconvenience, although the Pentateuch does not refer to any such suspension. We shall have occasion further on, to show that this was also the case with some other rites which were not performed, although the religious duty of which they formed part were observed.

58. When we now join all these data together, the direct and indirect ones, those distinctly given, and those arrived at inferentially by a close analysis of passages not primarily intended to furnish information concerning the condition of Israel either in Egypt or the Desert, a picture will be formed materially differing from that which the Bishop holds up to us, and on which he bases the objection which we are now examining. To present to the reader this picture in its completeness, and thus enable him to judge in how far the Bishop's objections are founded, we will now give an historical account of the state of Israel in Egypt and the Desert, supplying those links in the Mosaic narrative, to furnish which lay not in the plan of the sacred writer; who, as we have stated before, designed to write the history of a religious idea, the bearers of which were Israel, and not the history of this people itself.

SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF ISRAEL IN EGYPT AND THE DESERT.

59. When Jacob and his family arrived in Egypt, they settled, at the command of Pharaoh, in the land of Goshen (subsequently also called Rameses, probably from its capital — Gen. xlvi. 11), not because it was uninhabited, which could hardly have been the case, since the district was one of the most fruitful in the country, but because it was contiguous to

the desert, or pasture land, so well suited to the new comers, who were shepherds, and brought with them large herds and flocks. As kinsmen of the principal personage next to the king and his chief counsellor, they enjoyed much consideration, soon entered into friendly relations with the inhabitants, and spread over the whole country, although the main body remained in Goshen, where they intermingled with the Egyptians, and even had Egyptian inmates in their houses (Ex. iii. 23).

60. The extraordinary fertility of the country, the abundance of the necessaries of life, the ease with which these could be obtained, the profound peace which they enjoyed, and the fruitfulness of marriages in ancient Egypt in general, coupled with the special Divine blessings resting upon them — promoted early and most fruitful marriages (*ibid. i. 7*). Other circumstances, too, favoured this extraordinary increase. For while the strict division into hereditary castes in Egypt — which, as a rule, admitted of no accessions from without — prevented the absorption of the children of Israel, as the minority, by the surrounding masses forming the majority, there was then nothing either in the institutions or customs of Israel that could have prevented the Egyptians, or individuals of other nations, from joining the descendants of Jacob, and becoming incorporated into their body. Such intermarriages undoubtedly took place (*Lev. xiv. 10*; *1 Chron. iv. 18*). When an Israelite married an Egyptian woman, she naturally had to join his kindred, as he would scarcely have been received into the caste from which she sprang. And when an Egyptian married an Israelitish woman, it may be presumed, that, in general, he belonged to one of the humbler castes, as no priest or warrior would have contracted a matrimonial alliance with a tribe of shepherds, and therefore *religiously* an abomination in the eyes of the Egyptians — at least, the higher classes (*Genesis xlvi. 32*; *xlvi. 34*). But Egyptians of the humbler classes may be presumed to have been naturally drawn to a

body of men enjoying, as kinsmen of the prime minister, much consideration, and in possession of much liberty. The only institution that they would have to comply with was circumcision (Gen. xxxiv. 14, 15), and this was then in Egypt a privilege and a characteristic of high caste, as all the priests practised circumcision. Moreover, circumcision was also practised by other peoples, two of which — Moab and Edom — are distinctly mentioned (Jer. ix. 24, 25). Thus, while Egypt's peculiar institutions did not tend to diminish the number of Israel, intermarriages with the inhabitants were most likely to increase it.

61. The intercourse with the Egyptians was also much facilitated by the attraction which their sensual worship exercised upon the Israelites. Numbers of these worshipped the gods of the country; and, although the ancestral institutions and traditions were not altogether obliterated from their hearts, yet, as is natural with generations grown up under new influences, these traditions became fainter and fainter; so that Moses had great difficulties in the desert to wean the Israelites from their idolatrous habits, contracted in idolatrous Egypt (Ezek. xx. 4—8; Ex. xxxii. 4; Num. xxv. 3).

62. Although this intercourse spiritually greatly deteriorated Israel's character, yet materially it promoted what we in modern times call civilisation. The Israelites learned from the Egyptians many trades and arts, in some of which they must have been very proficient (1 Chron. iv. 21, 22, 23; Ex. xxvii. 2), and which proved particularly useful to them in the desert, when they had to provide, by their own handiwork, so many necessaries, and to construct the tabernacle. While, therefore, the majority of the people remained attached to the hereditary occupation — that of shepherds — and pastured their herds and flocks in the desert, returning only from time to time to their homes in the land of Goshen, the minority

engaged in all kinds of useful works, like the rest of the Egyptians belonging to the lower castes.

63. But although the main body of the Israelites was settled in Egypt, yet sections of them continued to hold intercourse with the populations to the north of the desert, whence their fathers had immigrated. Artisans among the Israelites entered into friendly relations with ruder tribes, which availed themselves of the higher civilisation of Israelites acquired in Egypt, they being, probably, more easily won by foreigners than the Egyptians, whom national prejudice, or perhaps the law of their country, prevented from emigrating. Other Israelites, again, became during this period founders of cities in Palestine, and, consequently, were in friendly relations with the inhabitants (Chron. *ibid.*).

64. But while these peaceful artisans spread abroad the civilisation imparted to them in Egypt, the shepherds, sprung from the same stock, followed the instinct peculiar to roving tribes, and organised a hostile expedition into the neighbouring Philistia, there to carry off the cattle of the inhabitants of the city of Gath. But these lawless Ephraimites expiated with their lives the iniquity contemplated by them. They were slain by the men of Gath. (1 Chron. vii. 21.)

65. As the Israelites were originally received into Egypt as the king's invited guests, as they were engaged in an occupation repugnant to the notions of the higher castes, and as the Egyptian laws did not admit of the gradual absorption of the Israelites, these were allowed to retain their ancestral institutions and organisation. The foundation of this organisation was and remained patriarchal, the chiefs being the heads of the families, who formed the council of the elders, under the presidency of the chiefs or princes of the tribes, although this organisation naturally expanded as the number of the people increased, and although the new exigencies could not have failed to introduce new modifications. Thus nearly a century from the immi-

gration of Jacob passed. This period was one of great physical well-being and extraordinary development, although, as we have seen, of spiritual deterioration.

66. But now a revolution took place in Egypt, which swept from the throne the dynasty under which the Israelites had immigrated, and which had so much befriended them (Exod. i. 8). The new occupant of the throne, as is generally the case with founders of new dynasties, had to pursue a policy quite different from that of his immediate predecessors, and imposed upon him by the necessities of his situation. He had to reward partisans and to keep down the adherents of the fallen reigning family. To the latter the Israelites belonged, who were naturally attached to the late dynasty by ties of gratitude, and who, as an alien population, with few natural sympathies among the mass, had principally to depend for protection on the good will of the king. The position of the new king in reference to the Israelites was one of considerable difficulty. He dared not employ open violence against them, as they were too numerous for this, and being driven to resistance, might have joined the numerous adherents of the fallen dynasty, whose power was either not yet quite broken, or, if subdued, might, when joined by such a large body, have risen in rebellion. There was, further, danger of their marching out of the country, and joining the sections of their brethren and other kindred tribes in the desert and the northern territories, and, thus reinforced, returning and endeavouring to overthrow the new dynasty before it had time firmly to establish itself, which would have been for them the less difficult, as they possessed the necessary local knowledge, and might have found secret allies in the friends of the former king (ibid. 9). It, therefore, became necessary to proceed with great caution. The result of the king's deliberations was a subtle scheme calculated to break their power by degrees, to exhaust them by hard labour, to brutalise by cruel treatment,

and ultimately to exterminate them, or to reduce them into a state of slavery, believing as he did that an abject soul was the best security against aspirations after freedom. We shall see, further on, how successful this plan was, since this mental abjectness was one of the greatest difficulties which Israel's Divine lawgiver had to encounter.

67. It will be easily understood that the plan was kept a profound state secret, and that it was carried out with subtlety step by step, and that the first imposition of the task did not present itself as forced labour. By the previous dynasty, the Israelites had been employed as shepherds (xlviii. 6). This employment was, under some pretence or another, changed into service in the field and building. They were told that the services to be performed were in lieu of taxes due by subjects to the sovereign, and accordingly, the next step was to appoint officers charged with raising this tribute from the Israelites (ibid. i. 11). By degrees the yoke was rendered heavy, the bondage systematised and they were compelled by physical force to build the cities of Rameses and Pithom. The king himself came to Rameses, in the land of Goshen, there to superintend their labours, and to be on the spot to crush any attempt at resistance. These labours, however, were only due to the king, and not the people. The Israelites were exclusively the king's bondsmen, for whom, according to his directions, they had either to work in the fields or carry out his building schemes.

68. The existing organisation proving useful to the king's projects, it was allowed to continue (ibid. ver. 4). By giving his orders to the heads of the tribes, choosing the subordinate officers from the Israelites, and holding these responsible for the strict fulfilment of his orders, he had a much stronger hold on them than if he had attempted to dissolve the existing organisation and substituted another less suited to the character, traditions, and customs of the people. In accordance with

this organisation, which left the internal management of the people to their own chiefs, the labour was not imposed upon every individual. At first only a small amount of work was laid upon the whole people, distributed among the mass by the elders, and which was neither burdensome nor occupying much time. By degrees the work was increased, and became more fatiguing. A larger number of persons had for the purpose to be told off by the heads, and these had to work many hours more every day, in order to accomplish the prescribed task within the fixed time (*ibid. ver. 8*). Thus the bondage grew more grievous from year to year, in proportion as the despot's throne became more firmly established, the people more broken-spirited, and less apt to resist. Nevertheless, the whole people never simultaneously worked, as they possessed property of their own, and especially herds and flocks, which required their attention; and as time must have been allowed to them to work for themselves in order to maintain their families. Moreover, the elders of the people were not restricted in their intercourse with Moses and Aaron, nor were they themselves, although Hebrews, compelled by the task-masters to work. Thus we see, when Pharaoh became angry with them, he does not order them to go to work themselves, but only says: "Wherefore do ye, Moses and Aaron, disturb the people from their works?" (*ibid. iv. 5*). To judge from analogous cases (1 Kings, iv. 27, 28), the able-bodied population was told off in detachments to the work, relieving each other in a certain prescribed order from time to time.

69. Although we are not told so, yet we may easily imagine that as many as could escape from this slavery fled, and either led a nomadic life in the desert or joined their brethren in the various tribes among which they sojourned, Moses himself being a conspicuous example thereof. However, only comparatively few could escape, as the frontiers, no doubt, were well guarded, and as care was probably taken not to allow any Is-

raelite to pass the frontiers unless he left hostages behind—probably a family—guaranteeing his return in due time. It is also probable that the heads of the families were held responsible for their respective members, and who therefore, as a rule, did not attempt to flee, as their escape would have brought a great calamity on their chiefs. Under all circumstances, however, there must at all times have been a large number of Israelites beyond the frontiers, although at fixed periods they may have had to return in order to take their share in the work by turns.

70. At last, when the king believed that the last spark of independence had been extinguished in the people, he proceeded to the final measure, which was to bring about their gradual extinction. With the cunning which he has displayed in all these proceedings, he at first wished to attain his object by secret means. He ordered the midwives to destroy all Hebrew male-children at the birth. Here he met with the first check. These undaunted women dared to brave the wrath of the king. While the men were slavishly cowed under the lash of the task-masters, these midwives, without disguise, gave the tyrant to understand that they refused to become his tools in the perpetration of the crimes ordered by him. The crafty tyrant was therefore compelled to throw off the mask. An order was given to the Egyptians so seize every babe if a male, and to drown it. Whether this atrocious order met with resistance from the Egyptians themselves, not prepared to go the length of their king—or, what is more probable, the carrying out of this order gave rise to frequent collisions with the relatives of these infants, who with the natural instincts of parents resisted the executioners—or whether he dreaded a rising of the mass, driven to despair and wounded in its deepest feelings—the order was soon revoked, as shown by the sequel, since these murders had not perceptibly checked the popular increase, which must have been the case had any large number of children been destroyed.

71. But while the Israelites groaned under their heavy bondage, the future deliverer meditated in the desert on their fate. The accounts which Moses must have received from time to time of the sad condition of his brethren, either from fugitive Israelites like himself, or from Hebrew shepherds, who with the permission of the Egyptians came to feed their flocks in the desert, must have rent his heart. In due time, the mission of the deliverance of his people from Egypt was entrusted to him. He knew before he left Midian that he would have to lead his people to Mount Horeb (*ibid.* iii. 12); and we cannot doubt but that he explored the region fully, and made every preparation for the purpose, as far as lay in his power. His mission became known in Egypt before his arrival; for his brother Aaron was commanded by God to go out to meet him. The people, remembering the valiant man burning with love for them, who in the former reign had defended an ill-used brother at the risk of his own life, and the distinguished position he had formerly held at the Egyptian court, as the adopted child of a princess, were predisposed to give him a friendly reception and a willing hearing. And when he performed the miracles intended to convince the people of his Divine mission, they gave him their full confidence. Moses now, in concert with the elders whom the king held at Rameses, either as hostages for the tranquility of Israel, or as a convenient machinery for carrying out his orders, matured still further his plans, and made the arrangements requisite for insuring success. And although the king proved more obstinate to the representations of Moses than the people seemed to expect, and although there were fluctuations in their minds, and even moments of profound despondency, when they altogether despaired of the success of his mission, yet he knew how to inspire them with confidence and to keep up their courage.

72. More and more his plans unfolded and became matured. The people were divided into detachments, places of meeting

appointed, signals agreed upon, and at last the exact time for the departure fixed. Those beyond the frontier of Egypt were warned not to return, but to direct their march towards Horeb, and others assisted to escape. Herds and flocks, in as large numbers as possible, were led into the desert. The people were ordered to provide themselves with all necessaries for the journey, but not to encumber themselves with any household stuff or other things useless in a long journey. Instead of these he advised the people to demand, or perhaps to borrow from the Egyptians articles, small in size and yet great in value, and by means of which they might in due time replace what they would have to leave behind. A stock of garments would be particularly useful to them, since those which they might have on at their departure could not be easily replaced when worn out, for want of implements to work up the raw materials. Garments, moreover, admitted of being packed in bundles of any size, and would serve as covering in the night, as protection both from heat in the summer and cold in the winter. Garments, therefore, they were to demand from the Egyptians, as well as the portable precious metals (*ibid. xii. 35*). Moses scrupled the less to give the people this advice, as he knew that the Egyptians could easily, and would of a surety indemnify themselves for the losses sustained; for as the Israelites would have to leave behind their houses, their landed property, and all other chattels that could either not be transported or were not required for the journey, these naturally would pass into the possession of the Egyptians, who would have to repay themselves for any article given to the fugitives. Indeed, this advice to the people was only an act of justice to them, whereby they saved a portion of the property, which he knew would be confiscated by the Egyptians, and which must have far exceeded in value any articles or sums which the Egyptians could have given the departing people.

73. At last the hour of deliverance struck. The Israelites

had been fully prepared. There they stood, their loins girded and their staves in their hands—the young children and the sick and delicate sitting in waggons or on beasts of burden—and at the signal given they had only to take up the bundles ready packed. Moses and Aaron placed themselves at the head of the organised multitude at Rameses, while the other leaders marshalled their respective companies in the other meeting-places all throughout Egypt, as agreed upon; and so well were their measures concerted, that all these divisions set out on one and the same day, all directing their march towards the common place of meeting, at the edge of the desert, at the head of the gulf now called the Gulf of Suez, with the view of passing it, and then turning towards the east, picking up on the march the various bodies either waiting for or preceding them, and at last joining in the Desert of Sinai.

74. The whole Israelitish population settled in Egypt, represented by the chiefs at Rameses, was about 600,000 adult males, many of whom, or perhaps even the majority, had contrived previously in small bodies to reach the desert, there to await the rest of their brethren and the leaders. Many other fellow-slaves, not of Israelitish descent, contrived in the moment of confusion to escape together with the Israelites, whom the Pentateuch designates a “mixed multitude” (*ibid. xii. 38*), and to whom the humanity of Moses offered shelter and protection, although by their number and evil propensities they greatly increased his anxieties and difficulties. Having arrived at Etham, on the edge of the desert, at the head of the gulf, or close to it, Moses was disquieted by apprehension lest the warlike Philistines, whose dominions extended from the south of Palestine to the northern border of the gulf (*Gen. xxvi. 1*), mistrusting the intentions of Israel, should attack them. There had been before an unsuccessful attack of Israelites on Philistines (*1 Chron. vii. 21*), and these might now suspect a similar expedition. The rumour seemed to have reached Moses at

Etham (Ex. xiii. 17), deserved careful consideration. For this obstacle he seemed not to have been prepared. Encumbered as the detachment led by him was with women and children—comparatively few as were the able-bodied men with him, since large bodies, which had preceded him in small sections, were far away from him—and destitute of arms, as most of the people with him were—he was not in a position to offer battle to an experienced, well-equipped enemy, without any encumbrance. Advance was fraught with the greatest danger, as the people, at the very sight of war, might in a panic have fled back to Egypt. Retreat would only have led them back to Egypt and to former slavery. Nor was it possible to remain where he was, as he would thus have been placed in the middle between the Philistines in the front and the Egyptians in the rear, nothing being more likely than that these two nations would act in concert. Nothing, therefore, remained for him but to retrace his steps, and then to march eastward, skirting the gulf on the side of Egypt. He, at all events, thus avoided the dreaded attack of the Philistines. Time might thus be gained for ascertaining the correctness of the report that had reached him, for giving them the pledges required for his peaceful intentions, and for thus enabling him to continue his journey unopposed. Little did he know that this obstacle, which appeared to him so formidable, was raised in order to give Israel, once for all, a striking proof of God's special Providence watching over them, and for bringing retribution on the wicked Egyptians, whose measure of iniquity was now full.

75. At the command of God, the Israelites halted between Migdol and the sea. The effect of this retrograde movement, with the cause of which Pharaoh did not seem to have been acquainted, was that he believed that Moses had become perplexed, wavering, doubtful which way to take, and, like all irresolute persons, was marching forwards and backwards; and

finding that the Hebrew leader had shut himself out from the desert, by placing the sea like a barrier between his people and the only region into which escape might be possible, he resolved at once to catch the Israelites in the trap into which they had been led by their own chief. The organisation of Egypt, where the soldiers formed a special caste, always ready for war, enabled him to assemble his forces without delay, and he reached Israel, as he expected, on the border of the sea. The danger which Moses had apprehended from an attack of the Philistines now presented itself in a much more formidable shape. The people were unable to fight, for the reason given; nor could they advance or retreat. This was the moment God had chosen for the performance of the most striking miracle recorded by revelation. A powerful east wind, blowing for hours, drove back the water, and laid bare a broad channel. The Israelites marched forward; and as the greater part of their herds and flocks, as well as large bodies of the people, were already on the other side of the sea, the detachment under Moses could effect their passage in one night. The Egyptians, who probably mistook this miraculous division of the waters for a very low tide, precipitately followed the Israelites; and as the wind, the moment the latter had reached the opposite coast ceased to blow, the waters, no longer kept out of their channel by the violence of the hurricane, rushed back into their bed, and buried the pursuing Egyptians under their waves.

76. But this departure from the route originally marked out by Moses for the march of the people, seemed to have considerably disarranged his plans, rendering some of his preparations unavailable. The people now came into regions where there was no water, or where the water was so bitter that it was quite undrinkable. Special Divine interposition became necessary; and it was granted them. Their first stay they made at Marah, probably with the view of awaiting the arrival of other detachments. Here the great leader had leisure for framing

some general laws and sanitary regulations, the strict observance of which was doubly requisite in the encampments of such a vast multitude in so sultry a climate. They were accordingly promulgated with the Divine sanction, strictly enjoined by the voice of God, and the promise given that those adhering to them would be free from the diseases with which Egypt was visited (*ibid.* xv. 26).

77. Six weeks after their departure from Egypt, the provisions which the people had brought out with them were consumed, and no other food but their cattle and their produce remained. But the consumption of their cattle would only have averted the famine for a short time. They would, moreover, have thereby altogether lost the milk and the products made therefrom, as well as the fleece, so requisite for clothing. They would, further, have lost all chance of supplying their other wants, by the exchange of these products for other articles. This remedy, therefore, was not available. A special Divine interposition once more became requisite, and once more it was granted. Henceforth they were miraculously supplied with manna (*ibid.* xvi. 4).

78. However favourable to Moses' scheme had been Israel's organisation in Egypt, it was clearly not suited for a migratory population, whose condition of existence, under the pressure of new emergencies, had so greatly changed. Its defects had become more and more evident in the march to Sinai. But the moment for re-organisation had not yet come. This was to be effected at a subsequent period, in connection with the erection of a sanctuary and a census. Meanwhile the multitude, without strict order, journeyed towards Sinai, the place of meeting agreed upon. The consequence was, that while the strong and able-bodied pushed on, the weak, sick, and way-worn lagged behind.

79. While thus marching, without military order and without due precaution, Amalek, with a considerable force, attacked

these stragglers (Deut. xxv. 18). It may be presumed, that Amalek, who lived on the northern borders of the desert, and was more familiar with it than any of the more remote tribes, was instigated by these to attack Israel suddenly, and to destroy them, and thus to prevent the intended invasion, reports of which had reached them, and which they greatly dreaded (Exod. xv. 14, 15, 16). Notice of the attack soon reached Moses, who was in advance with the main body. Fortunately, Moses was now in a much better position to meet the assailants than he had been three months before, when successively threatened first by the Philistines and afterwards by the Egyptians. He then had with him a comparatively small number of able-bodied men, who, moreover, had few or no arms, but instead thereof were encumbered with a crowd of women and children. But now, having been joined by many other detachments, and being in possession of a considerable store of arms, some of which had been brought out from Egypt, while others, during the two months, had been procured from friendly tribes—perhaps the neighbouring Midianites—and, again, a third supply obtained from the drowned army of Egyptians, whom the waves of the sea cast out (*ibid. xiv. 30*)—Moses despatched at once to the rear a valiant force, under that able captain who subsequently proved his great strategic skill—Joshua. Great valour and skill were, indeed, necessary to inspire bands of slaves, untrained in the use of arms, with the necessary courage and confidence in their leader, to fight an enemy who, having come for the purpose of attacking, was no doubt well-equipped, and provided with all kinds of weapons. The position was truly critical—critical enough to fill Moses with earnest apprehension. Yet the presence of the Divine leader lifting up his hands in prayer, conspicuous to the combatants from the hill which he occupied, and the generalship of Joshua, ultimately achieved a complete victory. Israel now, without further hindrance, continued their march

to Sinai, where they arrived in the third month after their departure from Egypt.

80. In the three months that had elapsed between the departure of Israel from Egypt and their arrival at Sinai, all sections of the people, whether sojourning with desert tribes in adjoining territories, or wandering about as nomads, had had time to repair to the “mountain of God;” so that the whole people were assembled in its vicinity. While Moses, with the elders and other prominent persons, took up their position at the foot of the mountain, the multitude spread around far and wide in the neighbouring wadies and mountains. It was not without good reason that Sinai had been selected as the scene of the great work which was to be accomplished. Between Sinai and Canaan stretched the formidable desert of El Tyh protecting the people from any sudden attack from the north. The Red Sea and the easily defended defiles along its coasts barred out the Egyptians. Here, therefore, there was no occasion for Moses to fear any disturbance in the performance of the extraordinary task before him. Moreover, the friendly tribe of the Midianites (1 Sam. xv. 6) was near enough at hand to prove useful to the people; while Sinai itself, as we have shown before, was capable of yielding the necessary supply of water from at least one perennial brook. With the water there were also trees and pasturage.

81. Moses, immediately on his arrival, made the necessary preparations for the stupendous event, the scene of which, Sinai was destined to be. The people were commanded to sanctify themselves, boundary lines were drawn around the mountain, and guards placed, who had orders not to allow either man or beast to trespass upon them (Exod. xix. 12, 13)—orders which were absolutely necessary to prevent the confusion and the rush, with their concomitant calamities, which must necessarily have ensued, had these precautionary measures not been adopted.

82. At last, the Ten Commandments were proclaimed on Sinai, and mankind rescued for ever from the mental darkness in which they had groped before. Other laws were likewise given and principles enunciated, which have since become the basis of the various codes of all civilised nations. The temporary tent of Moses without the camp, where he had Divine revelations, was now replaced by a permanent one—the tabernacle. The Divine service, which was to be national, and obligatory—Divine service by individuals, whether by sacrifice or prayer, was quite voluntary (Lev. i. 3)—was duly arranged, and a census of the people taken, which was subsequently made the basis of their re-organisation.

83. The sojourn under Sinai was moreover marked by two incidents. The first was the visit of Jethro to Moses. Although the account of it precedes that of the arrival of the people under Sinai (Ex. xviii. 5), yet it evidently took place afterwards, as is clear from verse 5, where we are distinctly told that Moses was at the time encamped at the mountain of God. We notice on purpose this transposition, because it is distinctly represented as such by the sacred text, and not because it is the only one. On the contrary, there are numbers of other transpositions in the Pentateuch which are not recognised as such at first sight, as in the case of the narrative under notice, and which are only discovered by close examination.

84. However, to return from this digression, the visit of Jethro resulted in advice to Moses, which was productive of great benefits both to him and the people. At Jethro's suggestion, an important modification was introduced into Israel's organisation. Hitherto, all offices among the people, as is characteristic of the patriarchal system, were hereditary. It was the chiefs of the families, and in a higher instance the princes of the tribe, who, according to ancient custom, settled all differences between Israelite and Israelite. But the total change produced by the conversion of a settled into a migratory

population, rendered the ancient institutions and precedents inapplicable. And since mental acuteness and love of justice cannot be transmitted without fail from sire to son, in the same way as hereditary offices, the heads of the families were not always competent for the performance of the new duties. The administration of justice, therefore, devolved upon Moses himself. The laboriousness of this task is well described in the same chapter of Exodus, verse 12. The advice given by the wise and experienced Jethro to his son-in-law, was to introduce a new element into the popular constitution. Leaving the hereditary transmission of office intact, and maintaining it as a dignity, he advised Moses to transfer the administration of justice to men to be elected for their qualifications. Here we see the first inroad on the patriarchal system, by the system of delegation, laying the foundation of a principle which was subsequently greatly developed, and which wrought great changes in Israel's constitution.

85. The second incident was by no means of so gratifying a nature. The speedy defection of the people from the God of Israel, and their worship of the golden calf, impressed Moses with a conviction of the absolute necessity of a radical change in one of the most important provisions only made a few months before. When, during the last plague on the Nile, the first-born of Egypt were smitten; the first-born of Israel were consecrated for the service of God (*ibid. xiii. 12, 13*). They were to perform the sacred functions of Levites and priests, in their respective family circles, and in the future sanctuary. The speedy revival of the Apis-worship among the people, and the ready acquiescence of the mass in it, convinced Moses of the unsuitableness of this institution. Scattered as the first-born were among the whole people, they were necessarily actuated by the motives prompting the rest of the population, subject to the same influences and sharing with them all their habits, propensities, passions, and superstitions. Nor was it

easy to fit them for the holy office to which they had been called. The agency that would have had to be employed for the purpose must have extended over the whole people, as it would have been impracticable to separate the firstborn from the tribes to which they belonged, to sever the relations in which they stood to their families, and to form them into a distinct body, under special regulations, and occupying a station of their own. Such an agency, from the very numbers over which it must have extended, could only have failed in its purpose.

86. It was evident that the institution of the firstborn must be replaced by another free from the defects inherent in the one established, by its very constituents better adapted for the high calling for which it was destined, and admitting of a speedy and thorough training for the performance of its important duties. All these conditions were fulfilled in the tribe of Levi. It was the least numerous of all, and therefore more easily taught and controlled. It was the tribe from which Moses sprang, and therefore, by the feeling of clanship, personally more attached to him than the rest of the people. The ancestral horror of idolatry had also been preserved in their hearts with greater vigor than in other tribes, as was evidenced by their conduct during the defection of Israel, when all the sons of Levi rallied round Moses and became willing instruments in his hands for the chastisement of the worshippers of the golden calf, and particularly from the eulogium passed on them by Moses in Deut. xxxiii. 8--11. The tribe of Levi, therefore, was selected for the office a year before intended for the first-born, and from this tribe itself, a new selection was made in the person of Aaron and his family, on whom the priesthood was conferred. It is the regulations laid down for this priesthood which have exercised a powerful influence, felt down to our days. It is from this priesthood that subsequently other creeds, based upon the revelation on Sinai, took their own

ideas thereof; and it is after the pattern of Aaron's priesthood that they fashioned their own, and by the development of this idea, created a moral revolution among mankind, which is transforming the human race.

87. In connection with the transfer of the priesthood to the Levites was the general census of the people then taken, and this again was preliminary to the new organisation which Moses now gave the tribes. They were divided into four large sections, not greatly differing in number, and to each section assigned a fixed place for encampment. The centre was formed by the tabernacle, around which the Levites were encamped, while the four other sections occupied each their position in the front and rear thereof, as well as on the right and left. This order once established, was, as a rule, not departed from, whether the people were resting or marching (Numb. x. 4—28). When occasion, however, required, the ark carried by the Levites was in the front of the people (*ibid.* ver. 33). This established order was of great advantage to the people, since it prevented all confusion in their journeys, every section knowing the exact time when to set out, and since it enabled every straggler to find out without difficulty his own tribe, and everybody else to find the person whom he wished to see.

88. The camp, or rather camps, extended over large tracts of land, very likely occupying an area of one hundred square miles. On this point we have, of course, no express information. But still there is a broad hint, more than justifying this assumption, as may be inferred from Numbers xi. In this chapter, the dissatisfaction of the people with the manna, and their hankering after flesh-meat, and the fulfilment of their wish, are described. We consequently read in ver. 31, "And there went forth a wind from the Eternal and brought forth quails from the sea, and let them fall on the camp, about a day's journey on this side, and about a day's journey on the

other side, about [or rather the circuits, סְבִיבֹת, of] the camp." As the camp formed a quadrangle, each side of which was about one day's journey, it was in reality a square, or at least approaching this shape. Now if we estimate a day's journey at ten miles, the whole area occupied was about one hundred miles. And this area would approximate that which we should have imagined the camps to have occupied, considering that the sanitary regulations required ample space, and that pens were necessary for their herds and flocks, and would, further, be in accordance with what we read of the immense extent of ground occupied by cities in primæval times, when Thebes had a hundred gates, and Nineveh was three days' journey. It may perhaps be objected that the phrase "about the camp," has no reference to the camp itself, but simply means that the layer of quails extended a day's journey, each side beyond the camp: but in this case, as the text distinctly says, that these birds also were all over the camp, we should have to add its area to that of "a day's journey;" and if the length of one side of the camp was ten miles, then the whole area occupied by the layer of quails would have been $10 + 10 = 20 \times 20 = 400$, *i.e.*, the quails would have occupied a space of 400, instead of 100 miles; and as the layer was about 2 cubits high, the phenomenon would border on the incredible.

89. Engaged in these important labours—in the promulgation of new laws, in the erection of the tabernacle, in its consecration, in the census of the people and their reorganization, in the transfer of the priestly office to the Levites, and out of them to the family of Aaron, and in their consecration and training—a year passed under Sinai; a year that may be pronounced to have been the birth-year of the nation and the starting point of the world's moral regeneration—a year so eventful, so solemn, and so important, as to be unequalled in the history of any other nation.

90. Having, at the command of God, celebrated the second

Passover under Sinai, the camp was broken up, and the people, in the prescribed order, set itself in motion toward Kadesh. Slow were their marches, as rendered necessary by the number of children, sick and infirm persons, and by the herds and flocks which were scattered far and wide over pasture-grounds and which were led at leisure towards the new stations occupied successively—and, further, by the hewers of wood and drawers of water, who had to furnish the people with the necessaries which they had to provide, and the caravans which visited distant tribes for trading purposes. So slow, indeed, were these journeys, that the distance from Sinai to Kadesh, which could be traversed in a few days, occupied several months; for although the people set out from Sinai early in the spring, they only arrived at Kadesh at the ripening of the grapes (Numb. xiii. 20), which, of course, was late in the summer.

91. The people having now been under his training for nearly two years, having been re-organised, supplied with arms, and, no doubt, practised in their use, Moses hoped that he might now with safety lead Israel to the conquest of the land promised by God to their forefathers. To test the disposition of the people, and to inspire them with courage, to take possession of their goodly inheritance, he, at the command of God, selected at Kadesh twelve influential men, conspicuous in their respective tribes and fair representatives of the popular sentiment. These he commissioned to spy the land and report to the people their impressions. But another bitter experience, perhaps the bitterest for the high-souled man, was now in store for him. He had yet to learn that two years were by far insufficient, even under the training of a Moses, to raise an abject mass to the level of freemen, and to inspire slaves with the courage of heroes. He had yet to learn that a generation so broken-spirited, so cowed and crushed as the Israelites had been in Egypt, had lost all power to raise themselves, even after the removal of the weight which pressed them down.

The report of the returning spies only reflected the popular feeling. The treasure was attractive enough, but alas, the dragon that guarded it was too terrible to be overcome. The doom of the cowardly generation was now sealed. They were to perish in the desert, and their children, brought up under new influences, were destined to be the heirs of the promise made to the fathers. Thirty-eight years longer were they doomed to spend in the desert. To avoid an attack of the Canaanites, Moses now led the reluctant and restless people back into the desert, towards the gulf of Akaba.

92. As yet we have been able to place before our readers the eventful history of these two years as a connected whole, and in chronological order. But now we have arrived at a period which presents to us a comparative blank, and even the few events recorded are narrated without strict attention to chronological order. We are left to inferential evidence to arrange these events in proper order. This silence of the sacred historian, however, can be easily accounted for. The work of the law-giving and of organisation was accomplished. The encampments of the people were protracted, and the incidents giving rise to new laws were few. The days, weeks, and years, as they passed, resembled each other, without being marked by any occurrence the memory of which might have proved useful to posterity. There is only one event which marked this dreary period, and which seemed to have been in direct connection with the fact which doomed the unworthy generation to perish in the desert. This event, which stands out in bold relief, and more than any other exhibits the popular character, was the rebellion of Korah. It was a civil as well as religious rebellion. While the lay conspirators, with the impatience and sullenness of suddenly emancipated slaves, in their short-sightedness reproached Moses for his presumed inability to redeem his pledge, and bring them to a land flowing with milk and honey, the Levitical rebels charged Moses

and Aaron with ambition and self-aggrandisement (Num. xvi. 3, 13, 14). The littleness of their own minds disabled them from gauging that of a man who, in his youth, while luxuriating in a royal palace as the adopted son of a princess, went forth to see the burdens of his brethren, and in the defence of one of them imperilled his own life, and who in his old age, when the highest power was within his own grasp, allowed his children to sink into obscurity, entrusting the spiritual office to his brother, and the temporal dignity to one in no way related to him by the ties of blood. Joshua, the successor of Moses, was not even of the tribe of Levi.

93. How many years of the thirty-eight passed before the people again bent their steps towards Kadesh, we are not informed. But in the fortieth year after their departure from Egypt, we find them again encamped in the same place where they had been thirty-eight years before. The events which now occurred again thicken upon us, and once more we are left to inferential evidence to reduce them to exact chronological order. We only ascertain from the plain word of the text that the death of Aaron preceded the second census, the episode with Balak, King of Moab, and the attack on the Midianites by Israel; for, in these occurrences, it is Eleazer, Aaron's son, and not Aaron that acts as high priest. We are certainly informed (Numb. xx. 1) that the Israelites arrived in the first month in the desert of Tzin. But we are not told whether it was the thirty-ninth or fortieth year of their wanderings. Here Moses and Aaron incurred the Divine displeasure by their inattention to the execution of a Divine command, in the performance of a miracle for the supply of water to the parched people, and which was intended to sanctify the name of the Lord (ibid. 12). Soon afterwards (ibid. xxxiii. 38)—that is, in the fifth month of the fortieth year—Aaron died, and was succeeded in the priesthood by his son Eleazer. Having conquered Sihon and Og, and taken possession of their

territories, Moses led the victorious people to the eastern banks of the Jordan, in the plain of Moab, and there, in a remarkably pathetic and affecting speech, he gave the people a succinct account of God's dealings with them since their departure from Egypt, repeated the principal commandments, and added some new ones; and, having foretold the future of his people, and embodied his sentiments and experiences in one of the loftiest poems ever composed, this extraordinary man—the like of whom has not risen since—gave his parting blessing to the people whom he loved more than himself; and having cast a wistful glance at the goodly land which God had promised them—but, alas! which it was not his lot to enter—he died on Mount Nebo.

94. We have now brought to a close our sketch of the history of the sojourn of the Israelites in Egypt, the exodus, and their journeys in the desert, in as far as it was conducive to our purpose, and further have, in the course of our narrative, pointed out several of the Bishop's objections, which are thereby removed. These objections are chiefly formulated in chapters 11, 12, 20, and 21 of the Bishop's work; and it now devolves upon us to make the proper application of our general sketch to the special propositions laid down by the Bishop, so that their untenability may be seen at once.

THE MARCH OUT OF EGYPT (Chap. xi.).

95. In this chapter, the Bishop raises a number of objections, which may be formulated in the following proposition:—

96. According to the text, two million of people, with their multitudinous flocks and herds, must have started from Rameses at a moment's notice. Moreover, how could all these beasts have been supported on the journey from Rameses to Etham, and then, again, when in the wilderness of Shur? To this we reply, that we have shown (*P. G. 2*) that the Israelites had

at least five days' notice; that the departure took place not from one city, but from the whole land of Egypt; and that they did not march out in one, but in several bodies. We have, further, pointed out the probability that the greatest portion of their herds and flocks was at all times pasturing in the desert, and that considerable bodies of the people preceded the departure of the leaders and chiefs, while others were at all times in the desert, attending to the cattle.

THE SHEEP AND CATTLE OF THE ISRAELITES IN THE DESERT (Chap. xii.).

97. The objections embodied in the twelfth chapter may be formulated thus: If the people were miraculously supplied with manna, the cattle were left to gather sustenance as well as they could. How was this possible in so frightful a wilderness, absolutely waterless, and therefore also without vegetation? To this we have replied that the desert, as a whole, was then not so barren as it is now; that it was the home both of settled nations and migratory tribes; and that the very Hebrew term **מִדְבָּר**, generally rendered "desert," actually means "pasture-ground" (G. G. 4). We further pointed out the probability, that the flocks and herds were scattered far and wide, as is to this day the case with the flocks pasturing in the desert of Syria; that the Israelites, being on good terms with at least some of the desert tribes, had not always to fear attacks; and that, in case of danger, the camp was spacious enough to offer a refuge to those threatened.

98. But, asks the Bishop, if it should even be granted that the Israelites had during the last thirty-seven years of their wanderings the means of supplying their wants, how was this possible during their stay under Sinai for a whole year, when all travellers that ever visited those regions agree in describing them fearfully barren, absolutely without herbage and water.

To this we replied, that Sinai, at the time, had at least one perennial brook (G. G. 16) and that the neighbouring Midianites had water; that with the existence of water there was also closely connected that of herbage; and that there is no reason why, while under Sinai, the people's cattle should not have been scattered far and wide for pasturage. That, moreover, artificial provisions for storing up supplies of water, with which we are now not acquainted, might have existed; and that there existed a special class among the people charged with the supply of this fluid.

99. But, further, remarks the Bishop, if the desert was different then to what it is now, how is it that the Pentateuch describes it as "a howling wilderness" (Deut. xxxii. 10); as "a place where there is neither tillage, fruit, nor water" (Numb. xxii. 5); and "only tenanted by noisome reptiles" (Deut viii. 15)? And why does Jeremiah (ii. 6) give a similar description thereof? To this, it will be noticed, we replied that both Moses and Jeremiah spoke of certain parts of the great desert, through which the Israelites had to pass, and which fully justified the account given—that while in these parts the sufferings of the people were great, and that twice, when no human exertion or foresight could have saved them, a miraculous interposition took place; and that there exist in the Bible allusions to artificial provisions made for the supply of water; but that the desert, as a whole, was not so destitute of either water or herbage, as to render subsistence therein impossible for any length of time (G. G. 25—32).

100. True, says the Bishop, we find allusions to other populations besides the Israelites being able to maintain themselves in the desert, such as the Amalekites, who fought Israel at Rephidim; but then he continues (85), if the Pentateuch be mainly unhistorical, we can take no account of the power of the Amalekites, as described in it. To this we answer, that there is something very unfair in this reasoning. The Penta-

teuch, the Bishop argues, is unhistorical, because it contains inconsistencies and contradictions; and any statements tending to remove these inconsistencies, or reconcile the contradictions, are inadmissible, because they are unhistorical. Everybody will see at once the flaw in this reasoning.

101. Again, asks the Bishop, the Israelites having stayed a year under Sinai, must have wintered there; whence did they get the wood for fuel, to protect themselves from the bitter cold and for cooking? and how was the cattle protected from cold and starvation? To this we replied, that the Israelites had had several months to prepare themselves for this season; that they had the means, the materials, and the artificers at hand to provide themselves with tents; that the Midianites, a friendly tribe, were close by, who might have given counsel and assistance; that the cattle might have wintered with those of the Midianites, or been driven to other pasture-grounds protected from cold; that if there did not exist sufficient fuel for the necessities of the people in the regions adjacent to Sinai, it might have been procured from many distant parts; that there was a special class — the hewers of wood — charged with looking after this necessary; that the cooking necessities of the Israelites were much less than our own; and that they possessed an unlimited supply of animal excrements, to this day used in the East for cooking purposes; that we are not quite sure that the winters under Sinai were then as cold as they are now represented to be; and that it is quite possible that the winter they passed there was providentially mild. (G. G. 34—37.)

THE NUMBER OF PRIESTS AT THE EXODUS COMPARED WITH THEIR DUTIES AND WITH THE PROVISION MADE FOR THEM (Chap. xx.).

102. I. This chapter states three objections, so closely connected that, although the first does not quite fully come within the geographical group, we yet discuss it here, as it cannot well be

separated from the other two. These objections are—1. There existed in the desert, after the death of Nadab and Abihu, only three priests, viz., Aaron and his two sons—Eleazar and Ithamar. Now, how is it possible that these three persons should have been able to offer the countless sacrifices prescribed in Leviticus?—the daily burnt offerings, morning and evening, the people's free-will offerings, the sin and trespass offerings, the additional offerings on new moons and festivals, and the various other sacrifices prescribed for numerous other occasions. Women alone, after child-birth, would have had daily to offer 500 sacrifices, which would have occupied 2,500 minutes, or nearly 42 hours daily. The offering of these sacrifices alone would have taken 14 hours each of the three priests daily, leaving him no time for meals or for the discharge of his other duties. And how could these other three priests have consumed the enormous provision made for them? As 264 pigeons would have to be brought daily as sin-offerings by women after child-birth, each priest would have daily to eat 88 of these birds as his portion. To this we may briefly reply that we have shown that the elaborate sacrificial system, as set forth in Leviticus, was either not observed at all in the desert, or at least not strictly; that we have no proof that the festivals, with the exception of the Passover under Sinai, were kept in the desert; that, from the very nature of some festivals, which, not even Passover excepted, were connected with certain harvest operations (Lev. xxvii. 10, 12, 39) it may be inferred that they, like so many other commandments, were intended not to be observed until the people should have entered the Land of Promise; and in cases of emergency, as at the Passover in the desert, to meet a momentary necessity, a special provision, such as was actually resorted to at a later period (2 Ch. xxix. 34), might have been made, which, as it ceased to be valid the moment the emergency was over, was not recorded in the Pentateuch, even as a number of

other occurrences, which produced no permanent effect, and were not intended as a precedent for future generations, are omitted in the Pentateuch, although some of them are incidentally referred to. We especially pointed out, as an instance, the suspension of the law of circumcision in the desert, nowhere alluded to in the Mosaic records. Moreover, that in cases of emergency, even in the desert, the law which so strictly excluded the Levites from the interior of the sanctuary for ever was infringed upon is quite evident from Leviticus x. 4, where we read that the Levites, Mishael and Elzaphan, at the command of Moses, had to enter the interior of the sanctuary in order to remove the corpses of their cousins, Nadab and Abihu.

103. II. But, asked the Bishop, granted that the Israelites had in the desert herds and flocks, which supplied them with the necessary beasts for sacrifices, where did they obtain the 90,000 pigeons which it was requisite to offer for the 90,000 births which annually, as statistics show, take place among two millions of people? "Did the people, then, carry with them turtle-doves and young pigeons out of Egypt?" To this we might answer, if there were no pigeons in the desert the women could, of course, not offer them, just the same as the Israelites could not eat unleavened bread at the Passover under Sinai, although distinctly commanded in Exodus xii. 8, simply because they had no cereals there. This law, like so many others, might have been intended to be carried into operation so soon as it should be practicable. But we are not so sure, that there existed at the time no pigeons in the desert—at least, in parts thereof; for, as parts were then inhabited, there is no reason to suppose that these birds, so much attached to the companionship of man, should have been absent from him. Moreover, the Bishop himself quotes three passages from the Bible (Psalms lv. 6, 7; Jer. xlvi. 28; Ez. vii. 16) which make it appear that pigeons were to be met with in the desert, only he arbitrarily assumes that the desert there spoken of designated

some uncultivated land in Palestine, and not the desert through which the Israelites passed.

104. III. Then again, asks the Bishop, how is it that thirteen cities were required for the priests all around Jerusalem in the time of Joshua (Josh. xxi. 19), when there only existed Eleazar, his son Phineas, and their families, and perhaps also Ithamar, although no mention is made of him, and when Jerusalem became the centre of worship at a much later period only. The answer is simple. These thirteen cities were assigned to the priests; they were their property. They could let the fields and houses to others, and derive revenue from them, until they should have become numerous enough to require them for their own occupation. It is, further, much more likely that David, in the selection of Jerusalem for his capital, and the centre of worship, was, to some extent, guided by the circumstance that the priests were settled in the neighbourhood, than that these cities were given them at a later period, because the neighbouring Jerusalem was the centre of worship. We have hitherto argued on the Bishop's assumption, that there existed only three, or at the utmost four priests, viz., Aaron, and after his death Eleazar, Ithamar, and Phineas. But there is no proof that Eleazar had only one son, that Phineas had at the time no children, and that Ithamar was altogether childless. Indeed, of the latter we know he must have had sons, as his posterity for a time was vested with the office of high-priest. The other descendants of Aaron, save the three named were not mentioned in the Pentateuch, simply because there was no occasion to refer to them.

THE PRIESTS AND THEIR DUTIES AT THE CELEBRATION OF THE PASSOVER (Chap. xxi.).

105. In this chapter, the Bishop urges—I. At the second Passover celebrated by the Israelites in the desert the paschal lambs

had, according to 2 Chron. xxx. 16; xxxv. 11, to be killed in the sanctuary, *i.e.* the tabernacle, and the blood sprinkled by the priests on the altar. Now these paschal lambs must have amounted to 150,000, and as these had to be offered, at the utmost, in two hours—from about three to five in the afternoon—each of the three priests would have had during the time to sprinkle the blood of 50,000 lambs. How was this possible? To this we reply, that because the performance of the task within the time specified was impossible; for this very reason it is clear the strict injunction prescribed did not apply to this one occasion. For this one occasion, exceptionally, God might not have required the blood to be sprinkled at all on the altar, or might have allowed the Levites to assist in the service, or extended the time necessary for it. The precedents for such temporary suspensions of laws when there existed physical impossibilities, or danger attending their observation, are not wanting. We again refer to the law of circumcision, temporarily suspended; to the law of sacrifices, imperfectly observed in the desert; and to the prescribed festivals — some of which, at least, could not have been strictly observed in the desert. The Bishop, of course, will say that the exceptional character of this Passover is nowhere mentioned in the Pentateuch. This is true. But we have shown that a great many incidents must have occurred in the desert which are not alluded to in the Pentateuch; that as this supposed temporary suspension had no further effect on the legislation, and did not give rise to any new ordinance — such as, for instance, the circumstance that some that were unclean could not keep this Passover (Numb. ii. 9, 10) — there was no occasion to make mention of this temporary suspension or modification.

106. Indeed, there are circumstances connected with the first two Passovers which clearly give them an exceptional character. There is, for instance, not a word said in reference to paschal lambs that might invest them with a sacrificial charac-

ter. Did we not know, from 2 Chron. xxx. 16, that they were in this light considered by the Israelites, we should not have inferred it from those passages in Exodus which refer to them. Again, there is the smearing of the blood on the door-post, which, although commanded at the first Passover, and nowhere repealed in the Law, was yet not complied with on later Passovers, not from disobedience to the will of God, but because it was known that this part of the ritual was intended by God only for the first Passover. Had this omission of a rite involved some rabbinical interpretation, we should not have referred to it, as we know that the Bishop, and no doubt many orthodox Christians, would disallow the authority of rabbis. But as this is a rabbinical testimony to a fact in which some of them at least speak as eye-witnesses, we do not hesitate to refer to this unanimous omission of a rite distinctly enjoined in the Bible, while other rites (such as the sprinkling of the blood by the priests on the altar), not distinctly commanded in the Pentateuch, are a proof that there attached, to some extent, an exceptional character to the first two Passovers, and that we, therefore, may well admit the temporary suspension or modification of some rite which would then have rendered impossible the observance of the Passover as it was kept in later times, when the obstacles existing in the desert were removed.

107. II. But, continues the Bishop, even if the difficulty just stated could be overcome, how could 150,000 lambs have been killed by at least 150,000 people in the court of the tabernacle, which could only have held at the utmost 5,000 people? To this we answer that it is a gratuitous assumption to suppose that so many killed the passover at one and the same time. We know, from the testimony of the rabbis, what the practice was at the time of the second temple. Those who brought the passover entered the temple by detachments. If the time was not sufficient to allow all the detachments to kill the

paschal lambs within the period prescribed, there might have been erected for the occasion a temporary forecourt, and consecrated for the purpose. We know, that under similar circumstances, at a later period, a similar expedient was resorted to; for when at the consecration of the temple of Solomon (I Kings viii. 63 — 65), an unusually large number of sacrifices were offered, “the king hallowed the middle of the court that was before the house of the Eternal: for there he offered burnt-offerings and meat-offerings and the fat of the peace-offerings, because the copper altar that was before the Eternal was too little to receive the burnt-offerings and meat-offerings and the fat of the peace-offerings.” We have, in our reply, taken no notice of the large numbers in which the Bishop deals, as we shall have to submit these to a closer examination in the arithmetical group of objections, to the consideration of which we now proceed, and which will reduce the difficulties raised by him to their true dimensions.

III.

ARITHMETICAL GROUP.

1. We have again to remind our readers of the position proved by us before—viz., that a number of incidents occurred in the desert, and local and temporary regulations were made, which were not recorded, but which are occasionally referred to, and which we only know inferentially. These omissions are still more numerous in matters involving no law to be observed in future generations, and only referring to results recorded as facts. Such are, in general, the numbers and genealogies reported. But a close attention to what we have called incidental, and therefore undesigned, evidence, will, we trust, help us in discovering some of the missing links, which

will then represent the sacred text in a light different from that in which the Bishop views it.

We begin with Chapter vii.—

THE NUMBER OF THE PEOPLE AT THE FIRST MUSTER
COMPARED WITH THE POLL-TAX RAISED SIX MONTHS
PREVIOUSLY.

2. The Bishop, referring to Ex. xxx. 11—13, which enjoins at every census the levying of a poll-tax of half a shekel on every male from twenty years and upwards, after the shekel of the sanctuary, raises two objections; he, in the first place, asks how the term “shekel of the sanctuary” could have been used when no sanctuary as yet existed; and secondly, how can it be accounted for that the result of the census of the people, described in Numb. i. 1—46, when the number of males from twenty years and upwards amounted to 603,350, should have agreed to a unit with that referred to in Exod. xxxviii. 26, where the amount of the poll-tax is specified, and which took place six months previously?

3. Now, in reference to the first objection, we have to observe that the Bishop has once more been misled by the rendering of the Anglican version. קֹדֶשׁ, no doubt, sometimes means “sanctuary,” as, for instance, Exod. xxviii. 43, and in some other places; but then it is taken figuratively, standing for מקדשׁ, the abstract for the concrete. קֹדֶשׁ, in its primary sense, means “holiness,” as rendered by Benisch *in loco*. שֶׁקֶל הַקֹּדֶשׁ, therefore, means “shekel of holiness,” or “holy shekel.” Now the Bishop will not deny that although there existed at the time no sanctuary, yet the idea of holiness was not strange to the people. Indeed, every Egyptian temple had its *adytum*, its holy of holies, with the idea of which the Israelites must have been familiar. And as we are not to assume that the Israelites in the desert coined money of their own, or had a monetary standard of their own,

we must presume that the coins they used were Egyptian, and the computations in their trading transactions based upon the Egyptian standard. With that standard we, of course, are not acquainted, and unfortunately the sacred writer has neglected to acquaint us with it, evidently such an explanation not coming within the plan of his narrative. We are, therefore, left to conjectures, and one of these fully agreeing with what we see to this day among many nations is, that there were two currencies—a depreciated one, probably consisting of worn out coins, or containing more alloy than was legal, and used among the people in their every-day transactions, and the standard money, containing the full weight of the precious metal, as prescribed by law, in which the dues to temples, and perhaps also the taxes, had to be paid. This undepreciated currency was, in contradistinction to the other, called “the holy shekel;” and it was in this undepreciated coin that the people were commanded by Moses to pay their dues for the service of the tabernacle, then about to be erected. That such a double standard was not altogether unknown in those primeval days, may be inferred from Gen. xxiii. 16, in which we are informed that the four hundred shekels weighed by Abraham to Ephron were “current money with the merchant.” There must, therefore, have existed other coins *not* current with the merchant.

4. Before we proceed to answer the second objection, we must submit to a close examination several verses in Ex. xxxv., as well as the latter portion of Ex. xxxviii., wherein the amount of the poll-tax raised is recorded, as the account is marked with peculiarities which may point towards a solution of the difficulty.

5. In Ex. xxxv., from verse 5 to 9, Moses, having appealed to the people for free-will offerings towards the erection of the tabernacle, enumerates the various materials required. Among these are “gold, silver, and copper” (ver. 5). Not a word is

here said about a poll-tax. The silver was to be a free-will offering, just the same as the gold and copper, in conjunction with which it is mentioned. In verses 20 to 29 of the same chapter are enumerated the materials brought by the people as free-will offerings, and among which "silver and copper" (ver. 24) are again distinctly named. Now, in the next following chapter (verses 5, 6, and 7) we are informed that the offerings of the people were so abundant that not only was there enough for all the work, but that there was even a surplus. But although the sacred writer, in Ex. xxxviii. 24 to 31, acquaints us with the weight of gold, silver, and copper used in the work, he does not tell us what was done with the surplus, or how much it was. If it was not returned to the donors, which was very unlikely, if not impossible, it must have been laid up in the treasury of the sanctuary, such as we know the temple possessed.

6. We have, further, to observe, what must be evident to everyone, that the weight of metals used in the work of the tabernacle, as specified in the passage just referred to, was the produce of the free-will offerings made by the people, mentioned in chapter xxxv. Now, as we have remarked before, only free-will offerings are mentioned; no kind of tax whatever is referred to. Yet in verse 25 of chapter xxxviii. the silver given by the people as a free-will offering, just the same as the gold, mentioned in verse 24, and the copper, named in verse 29, is clearly described as the produce of the poll-tax. It is, therefore, evident that the silver brought by the people must have been considered in a double aspect—at first as a free-will offering, the same as the gold and copper, and afterwards as the poll-tax, levied on the people at the census, and, according to Ex. xxx. 16, used in the service of the tabernacle; which may be thus accounted for. When Moses appealed to the people for materials for the tabernacle, they brought all metals they could spare, among which was probably much

silver coin, the currency among the ancients, especially in those primeval times, having chiefly been silver. A portion of this silver was employed in casting sockets and making hooks for the sanctuary (ver. 27, 28). When, six months afterwards, the census took place, it was either found inexpedient to raise a fresh tax from the people for the sanctuary, when only shortly before such liberal offering had been made that there was a surplus, for which there was then little or no use, or there was such a scarcity of coin — and, perhaps, of silver in general — in consequence of the large offerings made shortly before, that it was impossible to raise the prescribed tax. It was, therefore, resolved to consider the silver offered shortly before for the service of the tabernacle as the poll-tax prescribed, which had the same destination; and there were then made as many additional hooks, the number of which does not seem to have been prescribed, as brought up the amount of silver consumed to the exact weight which the prescribed poll-tax would have produced had it been paid. If, therefore, the poll-tax here spoken of agrees with the result of the census, described in Numb. i. 1 — 46, it is because they were made to agree, and not because two distinct censuses within six months of each other took place, and which, in their results, in a most unaccountable manner agreed.

THE INSTITUTION OF THE PASSOVER (Chap. x.) AND “THE PRIESTS AND THEIR DUTIES AT THE CELEBRATION OF THE PASSOVER” (Chap. xxi.).

7. We now proceed to the consideration of an arithmetical objection enunciated in Chapters x. and xxi., the examination of which before now would have been out of place, although the other difficulties stated therein have been considered. In these two chapters the Bishop assumes that the number of lambs slain at the Passover in Egypt and under Sinai could

each time not have fallen short of 150,000, and from this he deduces that the number of cattle possessed by the Israelites could not have been less than two millions; and then argues that it would have been impossible to support such a multitude in the desert; and then again endeavours to show that neither could the court of the tabernacle have held the number of Israelites commanded to slay so many lambs within two hours, nor could three priests have sprinkled the blood on the altar within the time specified.

8. When we answered these objections in their proper place, we deemed it right to base our replies on the very numbers assumed by the Bishop. We are, however, now prepared to show that the data upon which the Bishop relied when fixing upon these numbers are altogether unfounded, and that, in fact, no data whatever exist to guide us, even approximately, in the computation of the number of paschal lambs slain. The Bishop's data are these:—The people were two millions in number. Now if with Josephus (*de Bell. Jud.* vi. 9, 3) we reckon ten persons an average for each lamb, there must have been slain 200,000. But as sometimes, according to the same authority and modern commentators, twenty persons joined for the purpose, we may take the mean — *i.e.*, 150,000 paschal lambs. But as these paschal lambs had all to be males one year old, we must assume that there were produced annually a larger number of male lambs, or there would have remained no rams. If we, therefore, assume that 200,000 male lambs were annually produced, we are logically bound to believe that during the same period 200,000 ewe-lambs were produced — *i.e.*, 400,000 lambs in a year, which, according to the information received by the Bishop from an experienced sheep-master, implied the existence of a flock of two millions.

9. Now the flaws in this reasoning are these. As the paschal lamb, in the time of Josephus, and in fact ever since there existed a sanctuary, could only be offered in the

sanctuary—that is, in the temple of Jerusalem—this offering could then only have been partaken of by the Israelites at Jerusalem, whether residents or pilgrims, the latter at the solemn festival, as stated by Josephus, *in loco*, far exceeding in number the residents. Now these pilgrims, as a rule, were able-bodied men, since children were not able to perform the journey, and women were not bound to do so (Deut. xvi. 16, and several other places). Now ten or twenty able-bodied, grown-up men, intent upon making a meal of it, might consume a sheep in one night; but the millions of Israelites either in Egypt or the desert were not all able-bodied men. Among them were myriads of infants, who physically could not partake of flesh, and many delicate and sick persons, with whom flesh-meat would not have agreed; myriads of children who are rarely fond of meat; and again, myriads of women, who, as a rule, are not such hearty eaters as men. We may therefore assume, that not fifteen, but thirty persons may have been reckoned to one paschal-lamb, which would reduce their number from 150,000 to 75,000, and accordingly, the whole number of sheep possessed by the people to one million. Further, as the paschal lamb was only commemorative, it was sufficient for the partakers to have eaten only a morsel thereof. When there was, therefore, a scarcity of lawfully fit animals, hundreds of persons might have obeyed the divine injunction by partaking of one and the same lamb. Fifteen thousand lambs might thus have sufficed for the Israelites. We have, further, to deduct all the unclean and a number of other persons enumerated by Josephus in the passage quoted by the Bishop, who were not allowed to partake of the paschal lamb. Again, as ewe-lambs are much more profitable, and consequently more valuable, than rams, the Israelites, when in want of male-lambs for paschal offerings, could have experienced no difficulty in exchanging with the Egyptians or neighbouring pastoral tribes ewe-lambs for as many rams as might have been required.

10. We have hitherto assumed, with the Bishop, that the animals slain were all lambs. But this was not the case. True, the Anglican version speaks throughout of lambs, rendering the Hebrew **בָּשָׂר** (Exod. xii. 3, and throughout the chapter) "lamb." But **בָּשָׂר**, as every dictionary shows, is the singular of the collective noun **בָּשָׂר**, which comprehends both sheep and goats. The correct rendering, therefore, of **בָּשָׂר** is "flock," and of **בָּשָׂר**, as its singular, "one of the flock," as translated by Benisch *in loco*. The paschal sacrifice, therefore, might have been a sheep or goat, at the option of the offerer. Indeed, this is expressly stated in ver. 5, where we read: "The one of the flock shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it from the sheep or from the goats." Before, therefore, the bishop can base any calculation on the assumed number of paschal sacrifices, it is incumbent upon him to show the proportion of the goats slain to that of the lambs; and as he cannot do this, his calculation, and consequently all the inferences drawn from it, fall to the ground.

THE NUMBER OF THE ISRAELITES COMPARED WITH THE EXTENT OF THE LAND OF CANAAN. (Chap. xiii.)

11. This chapter contains only one objection, which may be thus expressed. In Ex. xxiii. 27—30, God declared that He would not drive out the ancient inhabitants of Canaan in one year, "lest the land become desolate, and the beasts of the field multiply against thee," but that He would drive them out little by little. Now, asks the Bishop, the land of Canaan, as divided among the tribes in the time of Joshua, was in extent about 11,000 square miles; how is it that the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex, about as densely populated as was Canaan by the Israelites, the aboriginal inhabitants not included, do not become desolate, with the beasts of the field multiplying against the human inhabitants? Nay, more.

The 150,000 inhabitants of Natal with its 18,000 square miles, are perfectly able to maintain their ground against wild beasts occasionally killed in the bush.

12. Now to this we reply:—We will for a moment leave unquestioned the data upon which the Bishop bases his objection, and confine ourselves to the consideration of the parallel drawn by our author between the eastern counties and Natal on the one hand, and the land of Canaan on the other. This parallel, on closer examination, vanishes into thin air. However sparse the population of an island, it is comparatively easy to exterminate its wild beasts, because an increase from without cannot take place; and for this very reason, when once exterminated, unless purposely imported, they will not infest the land again. It is different on a continent, especially when a country, as Canaan was, is surrounded by extensive uninhabited regions. From such a country it will not be easy to keep out wild beasts; and should the population be at any time comparatively scanty, although more dense than in an island, it would be sure to be overrun by wild beasts.

13. Do facts bear out this our argument? Let us examine the pages of ancient history, as recorded in the Bible. When consulting the pages of the sacred writers, especially the prophets, we find they abound in references to wild beasts, speaking of them in a manner which shows that wild beasts, especially lions, bears, and wolves, were no rare visitors in the land, and with whose habits the people were quite familiar. The Psalmist, Isaiah, and Jeremiah, abound with these allusions, although they are not absent from any of the other books. A few instances will suffice. In Psalm xxii. 22, David prays: “Save me from the lion’s mouth.” In Jeremiah v., the prophet, denouncing the wickedness of the people, calls out (ver. 6): “Wherefore a lion out of the forest shall slay them, and the wolf of the evenings shall spoil them, a leopard shall watch over their cities; every man that goeth out thence shall be torn in pieces.” Again, in Proverbs, xxii.

13, King Solomon, castigating the slothful, makes him say: "There is a lion without; I shall be slain in the streets." A similar phrase occurs in xxvi. 13. Sufficient as these instances are, to show that centuries after Israel had taken possession of the land of Canaan and greatly increased, wild beasts were far from being uncommon in the country, we have direct proofs of their existence.

14. When, as we read in Judges xiv. 5, Samson, with his father and mother, went down to Timnath, a young lion came roaring towards him. When David fed the flock of his father, we are told (1 Sam. xvii. 34) there came a lion and a bear to assail the sheep; and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, we read (2 Sam. xxiii. 20) "slew a lion in the midst of a pit." Again, in 1 Kings xiii. 24, we read of a lion meeting a prophet on the road and killing him. A similar occurrence is narrated in the same book (xx. 36), of another man likewise killed by a lion on the road; and in 2 Kings ii. 21 we read that two she-bears killed forty-two children. From all this, it is clear that, comparatively small as was the land of Canaan, and numerous as the people were, they yet had difficulty in maintaining their ground against the wild beasts. This difficulty would have been infinitely increased, had the aboriginal inhabitants been driven out in one year, before the Israelites were sufficiently numerous to occupy the desolate places.

15. If the much smaller population of Natal is able successfully to cope with the wild beasts, the colonists are undoubtedly indebted for this to fire-arms, which, as known, effectually keep away wild beasts from the vicinity of man. Were the inhabitants of Natal compelled to fight these intruders hand to hand, as Samson and as David did, wild beasts would as frequently be there met with on the high-ways as they were in Palestine in those long by-gone days, and it would be doubtful whether the colonists could maintain their ground against them.

16. We have argued on the supposition that the passage contained in Ex. xxiii. 27—30, as the Bishop assumes, refers to the land of Canaan, as actually divided, under Joshua, among the tribes. But we are not so sure that the passage under consideration had any reference whatever to the Canaan conquered by Joshua. We are much more inclined to believe that it referred to the far more extensive Canaan described in ver. 31 of the same chapter; also in Gen. xv. 18, as bounded on the one side by the river of Egypt, and on the other by the Euphrates; and as again marked out, in Josh. i. 4, as bordering on the desert, Lebanon, the Mediterranean, and the Euphrates—an extent of territory actually possessed by King Solomon, as recorded in 1 Kings, v. 1 and 4, and containing about 50,000 instead of 11,000 square miles. Had the inhabitants of these vast regions been driven out before Israel in one year, at the time of Joshua, when the Israelitish population was by far too small to occupy them, the wild beasts would have increased to such an extent, that the people could not have maintained their ground against them.

THE NUMBER OF THE FIRST-BORN COMPARED WITH THE NUMBER OF MALE ADULTS (Chap. xiv.).

17. This chapter embodies an objection which may be thus expressed. All the first-born males in Israel amounted to 22,273 (Numb. iii. 43). Now, if we divide the whole Israelitish male population, computed at 900,000, by the above number, the product will be nearly 42. There was, therefore, only one first-born among every 42 males. Now this proportion of the first-born to the whole male population, is in itself so extraordinary, as to be irreconcilable with authenticated statistical observations, according to which, the number of the first-born should have been much larger. Again, each of these divisions of 42—or, rather, of 41—if we deduct one first-born

from this number—must have consisted either of his younger brothers or of the sons of a mother, whose first-born was a daughter. Consequently, each of these groups, consisting of 42 males, could only have had two mothers. But as there were as many females as males, the whole Israelitish population might be divided into 22,273 groups, each consisting of 84 persons, the children of two mothers; consequently, each mother in Israel, in the average, must have born 42 children, which is incredible. It is true, there might, in each group, have been some males whose eldest brother, a first-born, might have been dead, and who, if they had lived, would have swelled the number of first-born males by some thousands, bringing the number up, say to 30,000. But this would only diminish, and not remove the difficulty, as, by the same process of reasoning, it could be shown that in this case, every mother in Israel must have had, on the average, 30 children, and that, to a male population of 600,000 grown-up men, there were only 60,000 child-bearing women.

18. The difficulty is undeniable, especially if we, in accordance with the obvious sense of Ex. xii. 2,12, assume, with the Bishop, that the first-born here spoken of were those of the mother, and not of both parents. But are we thereby justified in the conclusion at which the Bishop arrives, that the account is unhistorical? The only conclusion which is warranted by the data given is, that, although the law declared that all the first-born sons in Israel were consecrated to the service of the Lord (*ibid. xiii. 2*); yet in practice there existed certain qualifications, the absence of which incapacitated such male for the office, and which, therefore, operated as a limitation in their census. When we, therefore, read, “all the first-born males . . . were 22,273,” the historian did not mean every first-born in Israel, but all the first-born qualified for service in the tabernacle. The bishop, of course, will object that this is a gratuitous assumption, the sacred text not alluding to any such

limitation. But common sense, assisted by a few Scriptural hints, points to this solution. We will first endeavour to show that, whatever the theory, in practice such a limitation must have existed: and, secondly, that such a limitation is actually hinted at.

19. The first-born males, we know, were to be set apart for the service subsequently performed by the priests and Levites (Numb. iii. 12, 13). Now suppose such a male had been a cripple, an idiot, or blind, could he have been set apart for the Divine service? Again, there must have been, in practice, a period fixed when he was to enter on his service, and a period when he was entitled to his discharge, or else the able-bodied first-born males would have had to attend not only to the service of the sanctuary, but also to the necessities of little children, incapable of any work, and of old, infirm people, past all labour. But on this point we are not left to conjecture. The qualifications of the Levites and priests, the substitutes of the first-born males, are distinctly mentioned, as well as the period of the service of the former clearly defined. Thus we find enumerated in Lev. xxi. 16-21, certain defects which disqualifed the priests from officiating; and the Levites did not enter upon their service before the thirtieth year of their age, and quitted it in the fiftieth. It therefore stands to reason, that the same regulations would also have applied to the first-born males, had they been called to service, although the sacred historian nowhere refers to any such limitation with respect to these.

20. Again, the only object of the census of the first-born males was to ascertain the number by which they exceeded that of the Levites, in order to enable this exceeding number to ransom themselves (Num. iii. 44—51). Now, as no first-born male of fifty years of age would have been liable to be called to the service of the tabernacle, even if the substitution of the Levites had not taken place, there was no occasion to

count those past such service. Nay, had they been counted, and one of them had been found among the exceeding number, he could have claimed his exemption from service without ransom, having passed the prescribed age. Further, were we to insist upon the literal interpretation of verse 43, we should have to assume, that among these first-born were also those of the Levites; for the text says distinctly (ver. 40), "And the Eternal said to Moses, Number *all* the first-born of the males of the children of Israel." These first-born Levites, who must have amounted to several hundreds, having been liable to the service of the tabernacle by reason of their birth, could, naturally, when subsequently numbered in the general census of their tribe, not have acted as substitutes for their own number of firstborn of the other tribes. Moreover, if any of those first-born Levites had been among the 273, by which the first-born of all tribes exceeded the number of the Levites, they would have had to pay the prescribed ransom to themselves, which is clearly absurd. The inference from this is, that first-born males among the Levites were not numbered among the first-born of Israel in general, although the text does not say a word about it—nay, construed strictly and literally, seems to imply the contrary.

21. But there is yet another circumstance connected with this census, which implies some limitation, with the nature of which, however, the sacred writer was not pleased to acquaint us. The text informs us that the number of Levites was 22,000 (*ibid.* ver. 39). Yet, when we add the numbers of the single families, as specified, the total is 22,300, viz:—

The sons of Gershon	7,500	Ib. 11—39
The sons of Kohath	8,600	
The sons of Merari	6,200	
<hr/>		22,300

How are we to account for the neglect of these 300 in the sum

total? Surely not by inferring from it, that the whole narrative is unhistorical; for even a writer of legends must make in a common addition the sum total to agree with the aggregate of the single items. This neglect must, therefore, have been intentional, and could only have arisen from some disqualification of 300 Levites, disabling them from becoming substitutes for as many first-born, although not otherwise disqualified for the service of the tabernacle. We will not speculate on the nature of this limitation; suffice it for us to know that such a one must have existed, and that its practical effect was to reduce the number of qualified first-born males in Israel, liable to be ransomed, to 22,273, although the number of first-born males in general was much larger. But, the Bishop will ask, why should this limitation not have been distinctly stated? We answer, because its record would have served no purpose. This substitution of the Levites for the first-born males was a measure carried out once for all times. Once carried out, it was complete in itself. It gave rise to no new ordinances; it was not to serve as a precedent to future generations. Under such circumstances, it sufficed to record the occurrence as a fact, without adding any further details. Had this limitation, instead of being purely temporary, had any bearing on future generations, it would undoubtedly have been recorded, the same as the disqualifications of descendants of Aaron for their priestly functions were stated (Lev. xxi. 16—21).

THE SOJOURNING OF THE ISRAELITES IN EGYPT.—THE EXODUS IN THE FOURTH GENERATION.—THE NUMBER OF ISRAELITES AT THE TIME OF THE EXODUS.—THE DANITES AND LEVITES AT THE TIME OF THE EXODUS.—REPLIES TO KURTZ, HENGSTENBERG, AND OTHERS (Chap. xv—xix.).

22. These chapters, the Bishop devotes to an important

enquiry. He inquires whether, in accordance with the data preserved in the Pentateuch, it was possible for the small colony of 70, settled under the protection of Joseph in Egypt, so to increase there during their stay, that, at the exodus, the people should have numbered 600,000 males, from 20 years upwards, as is evident from Exod. xii. 37. Passing by, for the present, the minor difficulties, the chief objections most elaborately and minutely set forth by the Bishop, may be thus summed up. The sojourn of the Israelites in Egypt could not have exceeded 215 years. This period was occupied by four generations—viz., Levi, Kehath, Amram, and Moses, in accordance with the prediction in Gen. xv. 16. Now Jacob's family, when arriving in Egypt, only numbered 70 persons (Ex. i. 5). Having inferred, from certain data, that the males of the generation of Kehath were 51, he continues: “In fact, in order that the 51 males of Kehath's generation might produce 600,000 fighting men in Joshua's, we must suppose that each man had 46 children (23 of each sex), and each of these 23 sons had 46 children, and so on!” (chap. xvii. 122). This, of course, is an unprecedented prolific increase, which exceeds the bounds of all credibility.

23. The Bishop's difficulty arises from his unwillingness to admit, that when Jacob and his family came to Egypt, they were accompanied by a number of servants, who, being circumcised (Gen. xvii. 13, 14), in time became incorporated with the families of their masters; that Egyptians intermarried with the Israelites, and joined their body; that the prevailing polygamy greatly helped to increase the people; that God's special blessing rested on them, so that they multiplied beyond all precedent; and that more than four generations may have lived during their sojourn in Egypt. The Bishop is much more disposed to assume, in reliance on the data as interpreted by him, that the number of warriors at the exodus did not exceed 5,000 men (chap. xvii. 118).

24. Now let us for a moment substitute the Bishop's figures for those of the Pentateuch, and see what they will lead to. After having spent some time in the desert, these warriors, at first under the leadership of Moses, and subsequently under that of Joshua, gave battle to several nations on this and the other side of the Jordan, laid siege to many cities, and carried on long and sanguinary wars (Josh. xi. 18). At last, this handful of warriors finally triumphed over nations, certainly not unwarlike, better armed, and infinitely more numerous than their invaders. What is more reasonable—to suppose that a handful of warriors performed all these achievements, or that Sihon, Og, and the seven Canaanitish nations, succumbed under the blows of a large host? Or is the Bishop prepared to reject the account of all these wars as unhistorical, and to construct the history of Israel from new data yet to be discovered? However, let us return from this digression, and examine the grounds on which the Bishop rejects the various explanations offered.

25. The family of Jacob could not have been accompanied by any servants when going down to Egypt, because, says the Bishop, "there is no word or indication of any such a *cortège* having accompanied Jacob into Egypt." Now supposing we were to be told that the Royal Family went from Windsor to Balmoral, should we be justified in inferring from the silence of the papers as to the *cortège*, that the Queen travelled quite without attendance; that she had no domestics with her; that the Prince of Wales had no equerry with him; that the Royal children were without governess or tutor? Such an inference would be truly preposterous. Yet some such thing it is that the Bishop wants us to believe, simply because the sacred historian did not deem it requisite to make especial mention that Jacob and his family were accompanied by their servants.

26. But although no especial mention is made of the circumstance, yet if we examine the narrative, we shall see that

the writer all the while pre-supposed that the travellers were accompanied by their servants. The account of Jacob's journey to Egypt is contained in the first eight verses of Gen. xlvi. Now therein we read (ver. 5): "And Jacob rose up from Beer-Sheba: and the sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, and their little ones, and their wives, in the waggons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him." Now these waggons must necessarily have been drawn by beasts of burden. These beasts required from time to time to be harnessed to the waggons, and to be unharnessed, to be driven, fed, and watered. There was work enough to employ the eleven sons of Jacob all along the journey, apart from the ministrations to the special wants arising on a journey, particularly when the travelling company included many children. But then, if, as the plain text implies, Jacob's sons in person carried their father and their families in the waggons, who had charge of their cattle and their property, which likewise came down with them to Egypt? for in the next following verse (6) we read: "And they (the sons of Jacob) took their cattle and their goods which they had gotten in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob and all his seed with him." This task Jacob's sons must have performed by deputy, or rather deputies, since they themselves had plenty of work on hand to engage all their time and attention, as we have seen. Jacob and his family, therefore, must have been accompanied on their journey by persons who attended to the cattle, who, according to the usage and institutions of the time, were servants—in other words, slaves—whose descendants in time might have been liberated, intermarried with the people, and became incorporated with them.

27. Again, while in Egypt, the children of Israel for nearly a century enjoyed great consideration and prosperity. This increase in wealth and numbers favoured a corresponding increase in servants, which, by a similar process of absorption, might have become incorporated with the people, and thus

helped to swell still more their numbers. And for the same reason, we may suppose that Egyptians themselves, at least in the time of Israel's prosperity, intermarried with them, joining the family to a member of which any of them was married, and being numbered in that particular family, as actually alluded to in Lev. xxiv. 10, where an Israelite, the son of an Israelitish mother and an Egyptian father, is mentioned. But the Bishop cannot for a moment admit this hypothesis; for does not the text distinctly say, after enumerating all the descendants of the patriarch (ver. 26): “All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which *came out of his loins*?” To this it may be answered, that the phrase upon which the Bishop lays considerable stress, and which we have italicised, whenever it occurs in the Pentateuch, only refers as an historical statement, to the immediate descendants of Jacob, who, as the text distinctly says, came down with him to Egypt, but by no means implies, that the people in subsequent ages received no accessions from without. The very fact that Moses deemed it requisite to make a special provision calculated to meet cases of this kind, shows that such instances must have occurred; for, in Exod. xii. 48, we read, that the stranger who wished to partake of the Passover, symbolising the final act of Israel's emancipation, and the first step toward an independent national existence, had to qualify himself by the reception of the sign of the covenant with God. And the moment he was circumcised, thus signifying his acceptance of Israelitish nationality, this stranger, although not a descendant of the patriarchs, became, to every intent and purpose, an Israelite, as distinctly stated in verse 49, where we read: “One law shall be to the native and the stranger that sojourneth among you.” Let it be borne in mind, that this law was given in Egypt before the celebration of the Passover, and that immediately after these instructions were given, we read (ver. 5): “Thus did all the children of Israel; as the Eternal commanded Moses and Aaron so did they.”

28. Nor will the Bishop admit the prevalence of polygamy as a means of accounting for the prodigious increase of the people, because such prevalence is not recorded in the Pentateuch. Now, had we undertaken critically to examine the Pentateuch, we should just have taken the opposite line of argument. We should have argued, that, as 70 persons are stated to have increased to two millions in 215 years, therefore polygamy must have prevailed among the people, and we should have held fast by this conclusion, so long as no statement from these very records could be produced rendering this opinion untenable. Not only can, to the best of our knowledge, no such Biblical statements be produced, but there are some which decidedly favour the opinion that the Israelites in Egypt were polygamists. They had before them the example of two of the patriarchs, Abraham and Jacob, the former having had two (Sarah and Hagar) and the latter four wives (Leah, Rachel, Bilhah, and Zilpah); and the lawgiver found it necessary to provide for the case in which a polygamist should wish to countenance the son of a favourite wife at the cost of a son of the less beloved wife (Deut. xxi. 15, 16). He had deemed it requisite to caution the future king of the people against marrying *many* wives (ibid. xvii. 17), thus clearly showing that polygamy in itself was not unlawful. He had even enacted a law which, under certain circumstances, might oblige a man to marry two wives (ibid. xxv. 5), since the person upon whom it devolved to marry his deceased brother's widow might have been married at the time. Nay, more, we have elsewhere cited from Chronicles an instance of polygamy, and that, too, the case of an Israelite, who married a Syrian concubine. But, then, the Bishop will ask, why does the sacred text not acquaint us with the prevalence of polygamy at the time? We answer, simply because the historian had no occasion to refer to it, no incident connected with it having given

rise to any special law or to any event the record of which would have proved useful to posterity.

29. Nor will the Bishop, in this prodigious increase of the people, allow any influence to God's special blessing. True, the Bishop argues, God promised the patriarchs repeatedly that their descendants would greatly increase. True, we read in Exod. i. 7: "And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceedingly mighty; and the land was filled with them;" implying an increase far beyond the rate usual in Egypt, and which, according to the testimony of several ancient authors, was exceedingly large (see Kalisch's Commentary on Ex. i. 7). But, then, argues the Bishop, do the data given bear out this statement? With the exception of Benjamin, the other sons of Jacob had no more children than we find in ordinary families. Joseph had only two sons; Levi only three; Judah only five, two of whom died childless; and Dan only one son. At a later period, Aaron had only four sons, two of whom died childless; Moses only two. The genealogical data preserved in the Pentateuch only justify a rate of increase which within 215 years would, at the utmost, have raised the population capable of bearing arms to 5,000, instead of 600,000, as stated in the text.

30. Again we say, had we proposed to ourselves the task of critically examining the Pentateuch, we should have pursued precisely an opposite line of argument. We should have argued, because the sacred text in one part distinctly informs us that the people increased at a prodigious rate, and in another that within 215 years 70 persons produced a male population of 600,000 from 20 years and upwards, therefore the genealogical statements recorded cannot serve as correct data for fixing the ratio of increase, nor guide us in ascertaining the circumstances which caused this prodigious increase; and we should have set about to discover the causes which render the genealogical statements preserved useless for fixing the rate of

increase. These causes it will not be impossible to discover, if we consider the particular object for which these genealogical tables were recorded, and compare them with those preserved in Chronicles, which the Bishop only quotes to reject them as unworthy of belief.

31. The object of these tables was to record the divisions of the people, which served as a basis for some special purpose, either distinctly stated by the lawgiver, or to be inferred from the context. Take, for instance, the genealogy of the Levites, recorded in Numb. iii. 15 — 29. The object of the genealogical table there is clear. It was to point out the three principal divisions of the tribe, each of which had to perform a special duty in the service of the tabernacle. Having pointed out the three principal divisions — viz., Gershon, Kehath, and Merari, the sacred historian proceeds to specify the sub-divisions of each of the main sections, informing us that the Gershonites were subdivided into four and the Merarite into two, according to the names of the founders of their families, as distinctly stated in the same narrative. The object of the historian being attained, he takes no further notice of any other descendants of the progenitors of these divisions, because they were not privileged to establish new families, but had to join one or the other of those so privileged. The sacred historian, after having given so much information as was necessary for his purpose, contents himself by stating the sum total of each division, leaving us to infer that the number of 7,500, to which the Gershonites amounted, was made up by all those Levites who either had from before belonged to this division, or were only now assigned to it, but not that they were all direct descendants of the two sons of Gershon (Libni and Shimei), mentioned in the same chapter. The same remark naturally would apply to each of the other divisions of the Levites, and, in fact, to every division in any of the tribes, and the enumeration of Jacob's grand-children (Gen. xlvi. 23).

32. This suggested solution receives confirmation from the following considerations. When Jacob's sons arrived in Egypt, they were all in the prime of life. Judah was 42 years old; Reuben, the first-born, probably 45; Joseph 39; and Benjamin still younger. Now does it stand to reason, that the eleven sons of Jacob, after reaching Egypt, should have begotten no more children? Surely it cannot be maintained, that they died soon after their arrival, and that, therefore, there was no time for begetting additional children, when we find, after the death of their father, who lived in Egypt 17 years, Joseph's brethren addressing him (Gen. 1.18), and, at a still later period, when he felt the approach of death, Joseph beseeching his brethren to bury him in the land of Canaan (ibid. 24, 25), he having attained the age of 110 years. This, it will be admitted, is all but incredible. Indeed, in the case of one of Jacob's sons Levi—there is an allusion to a child born to him in Egypt. Jochebed, the wife of Amram, we are distinctly told, was a daughter of Levi, born in Egypt (Numb. xxvi. 59). What has become of all these children, not one of whom is alluded to except Jochebed? Surely it will not be said that they all died without progeny. The answer is, that as none of these children was privileged to found a new tribe, they had to join those established; and being merged in them, no special record was made of their names. If this is true of the tribes, there is no reason why it should not also have been the case with the families. Not everyone of the grandsons of Jacob was privileged to found a new family. This privilege, for reasons unknown to us, seems to have been reserved for those of Jacob's progeny born in Canaan, or, more likely, within the lifetime of any of his sons. The children of those not so privileged had to join some of the established families, in accordance with some regulation not recorded, and therefore only a matter of conjecture; and these children, having been merged in the families which they had to join, the record of their names

would have served no purpose, whilst yet their number served to swell the sum total of the parent family, and, consequently, of the tribe which these families composed.

33. Another consideration is the preservation of the names of certain of Jacob's great-grandchildren in Chronicles, not recorded in the Pentateuch, although the names of their fathers are mentioned there. The chapter in 1 Chronicles to which we refer is the 23rd. In it we are made acquainted with the result of a census of the Levites, taken by King David (verses 3—24), and based upon that of Moses, recorded in Numb. iii. In this are mentioned by name several persons, sons of Levites, named by Moses, and to whom a different number of children is assigned in the Pentateuch. To point out an instance, thus, neither in Ex. vi. 18, nor Num. iii. 19, is any descendant of Hebron mentioned; while in 1 Chron. xxxiii. 18—20 four sons are enumerated. Now, without wishing to engage in the controversy to which these differences in the two genealogies have given rise, we believe we are yet justified in inferring that in the days of the chronicler names of descendants of Levi were known, alluded to, it is true, in Num. iii. 27, where the family of the Hebronites is mentioned, but not recorded there.

34. The next consideration arises from the same genealogy in Chronicles, verse 11, "But Jeush and Beriah (sons of Shimei, grandsons of Gershon — Num. iii. 19) had not many sons; therefore they were in one reckoning, according to their father's house." Here we are distinctly informed of the amalgamation of the two families into one, being reckoned as one. Now this amalgamation is not stated as an exceptional case; for the reason is given that the founders "had not many sons." It is, therefore, not too bold to conclude that in all similar cases families were amalgamated, and only the name of the principal recorded, just as tributaries empty themselves into larger streams, and there lose both their name and identity, while swelling the volume of the larger river.

35. But great as Israel's increase was within 215 years, was it so prodigious as to exceed all bounds of experience? We do not think so. There are cases of an extraordinary increase of families recorded in profane history approaching that of the Israelites. One which bears considerable analogy to that under discussion we quote from D'Herbelot's "Bibliothèque Orientale." In the article of "Abassides" he observes that 200 years after the Hegira the descendants of Abbas, uncle of Mahomet, males and females, had increased to 33,000.

36. Now, as Jacob, on his arrival in Egypt, was past child-begetting, and as Dinah and Serah, who came down with him to Egypt, were females, let us deduct them from the number of 70, which composed the patriarch's family. There remain 67. Now, when we multiply 33,000 by 67 the product is 2,211,000, a result considerably exceeding the estimate of those who calculate that the Israelites, at their departure from Egypt, after a sojourn of 215 years, numbered two millions, and which, therefore, allows of the necessary deduction for the twelve sons of Jacob themselves, should it be maintained that only a few children were born to them in Egypt.

37. Nor can the Bishop bring himself to believe that there were more than four generations in the space of the 215 years spent by Israel in Egypt; for are the generations between Jacob and Moses not distinctly enumerated?—viz., Levi, Kehath, Amram, and Moses (Ex. vi. 16—26). And was it not foretold to Abraham that in the fourth generation (after their immigration into Egypt) his descendants should return to the Land of Promise? Now, to dispose at once of the apparent difficulty presented by this prediction to Abraham, we will state that the Hebrew **רֹאשׁ**, rendered "generation" in its primary sense, means circuit, the space or period within which a number of persons live, or all those persons who are

cotemporaries, from the eldest to the youngest. The idea of a generation, in the modern sense of the word, whether we extend it to a century or contract it to 25 years, seems to have been quite foreign to the Israelites. Thus we read in Ex. i. 6 — “And Joseph and all his brethren and all that generation died.” Now Joseph and his brethren were, of course, part and parcel of their generation. If we measure the length of the generation by the life of Levi, it must have comprised 137 years, as was the age attained by him when he died (Ex. vi. 16). If measured by the length of the life of Joseph, it extended only to 110 years (Gen. l. 26); and if measured by the time required for a human being from his birth until he has himself children, a generation could, at the utmost, have comprised only 37 years, since in 74 years Joseph (he married in the 30th year of his age, and very soon afterwards Manasseh was born to him — Gen. xli. 46, 50) saw great-grandchildren (ibid. l. 23).

38. Moreover, that the prediction to Abraham could not have been intended to be taken in the strict definite sense in which the Bishop takes it, is quite clear, since it was not literally fulfilled, upon the Bishop’s own showing. The prediction distinctly says: “And in the fourth generation they (the descendants of Abraham) shall return thither” (to the Promised Land). The reckoning, therefore, must begin at the latest with Levi, who represented the first generation; then follow Kehath, Amram, and Moses, who is actually in the fourth generation from Levi. But it so happened that neither Moses, Aaron, nor any of the whole generation (Joshua and Caleb excepted), from 20 years and upwards, entered the Promised Land. They all died in the desert. It was, therefore, in the common sense of the word, the fifth generation from Levi — viz., Levi, Kehath, Amram, Aaron, and Eleazar — that “returned thither” — *i.e.*, entered the land of Canaan. The legitimate sense of the prediction, therefore, must be this:

God said to Abraham, when all the cotemporaries, from the eldest to the youngest, of those immigrating into Egypt shall have died, and this process been repeated twice over, then numbers of thy descendants who shall then be contemporary will again enter the land of their forefathers. Now this was strictly fulfilled; for contemporaries of Moses and Aaron—viz., all those Israelites who were under 20 years of age when the doom recorded in Num. xiv. 33 was fulfilled — did actually return to the Land of Canaan. This prediction, therefore, need not stand in the way of the supposition that more than four generations, in the modern sense of the word, lived in the 215 years that Israel sojourned in Egypt.

39. True, there were only four generations between Levi and Moses. But it does not follow that this was the case with all other families. The family of Levi seems to have been particularly long-lived (Ex. vi. 16—20), and comparatively little prolific, as shown by the two censuses in the desert, when the tribe of Levi was the smallest of all tribes, its number having been at the first census 22,000, (Num. iii. 39), and the second 23,000 (ibid. xxvi. 62), while in other families seven, and perhaps even ten generations seem to have succeeded each other in the same period, several of them may have been contemporary. Thus it appears from 1 Chron. ii. 18—20, that Bezaleel, the chief artificer in the construction of the tabernacle, and consequently a contemporary of Moses, was in the 7th generation from Judah—viz., Judah, Pharez, Hezron, Caleb, Hur, Uri, Bezaleel. Thus the daughters of Zelophehad, contemporaries of Moses (Num. xxvii. 1—3), were in the 7th generation, descended from Joseph—viz., Joseph, Menasseh, Machir, Gilead, Hepher, Zelophehad, his daughters. Nay, Joshua was the 11th descendant from the same Joseph, as stated in 1 Chron. vii. 22—27. The genealogy runs thus—Joseph, Menasseh, Beriah, Reptah, Telah, Tahan, Laadan, Ammihud, Elishama, Nun, Joshua. And

from this genealogy we incidentally learn how early the members of some families married and begat children, and this will thus help us in accounting for the prodigious increase of Israel. At all events, we see that there were more than four generations, in the 215 years; and, if we consider the generations of the tribe of Levi, as represented by the family of Kehath, as the minimum—viz. 4—and that of Ephraim, as represented by his son Beriah, as the maximum—viz. 11—we shall be justified in taking the mean of the two—viz. $7\frac{1}{2}$ —as the average number of generations in each of the Israelitish families. This will show at once, that the Bishop's calculation of the real number of Israelites at the Exodus, as based upon the assumption that there were only four generations in the 215 years they stayed in Egypt, is utterly devoid of all foundation. The fact is, as is evident from our previous remarks, that we have no data whatever for any such calculation. But if we fairly weigh the circumstances under which this extraordinary increase took place, as pointed out by us, we must arrive at the conclusion, that the increase was no doubt marvellous, in consonance with what we might have expected from God's express promise, but that it does not exceed the bounds of credibility, nor require us to have resort to a continued violation of the laws of nature extending over 215 years.

THE DANITES AND LEVITES AT THE TIME OF THE EXODUS. (Chap. xvii.)

40. We now come to the consideration of some minor difficulties raised by the Bishop, which, however, need not detain us long. In chap. 17, the Bishop subjects the increase of these two tribes to the very searching test which he had in the previous chapter applied to the increase of the whole people in general. These two tribes seem to him particularly appropriate to bring out the untenableness of the Biblical statements concerning

their increase, since Dan's descendants, at the first census, numbered 62,000 (Numb. ii. 26), although he had only one son, Hushim; while Levi, with three sons, Gershon, Kehath, and Merari, is only credited with 22,000 descendants. The Bishop calculates that in order to have that number born to him within four generations, Dan's own son and each of his sons and grandsons must have had about eighty children of both sexes, and yet Benjamin, who had ten sons, only numbered at the same census 35,400 descendants (*ibid.* 23). Now to us this very contrast between the number of the descendants of Benjamin's ten sons and Dan's one son is the strongest voucher possible for the truthfulness of the statement; for a writer of fiction or legends, who, wished to pass off his inventions for truth, would take care not to offend so much against what appears probable, as the writer of the Pentateuch has done in this case. Fiction that is intended to pass for truth, must never exceed the boundaries of the probable, the object being not to challenge inquiry; but truth, which has no ulterior object, may state what at first sight seems improbable, because it does not fear inquiry, or rather does not think of it.

41. We have only to suppose, that the influences enumerated by us, and which account for Israel's prodigious increase, operated upon the tribe of Dan, with a force ten-fold as great as that which was at work in the tribe of Benjamin, and the phenomenon which appeared so startling to the Bishop is explained. Thus we may suppose that Dan had in Egypt a larger number of children, than those born to Benjamin in Canaan, while the latter begat no more children in Egypt. That these children of Dan, all merged among the descendants of Hushim, born in Canaan, were much more fruitful than the children of Benjamin, and that, while the tribe of Dan was joined by many strangers, the tribe of Benjamin received no accession from this source. That the tribe of Levi, at the first census, only numbered 22,000, and at the second (Num.

xxvi. 62), only 23,000; while the tribe of Menasseh, during the intervening 38 years, had increased from 32,200 (Num. i. 35) to 52,700 (*ibid.* xxvii. 34), only proves what we remarked before, that the tribe of Levi was little prolific, and had, moreover, been subject in the desert, exceptionally, to casualties which greatly diminished its number, but which casualties, like so many other incidents that happened during these 38 years, were not recorded. It is therefore, quite futile to compare, as the Bishop does, this slow rate of increase with that of England during the same length of time, and to draw any inferences from it. To give such a comparison any value at all, the Bishop should not have compared the rate of increase of all England with that of a single tribe within a particular exceptional period, and subject to influences with which we are altogether unacquainted: but should have selected some particular district in England, where the population has been for the last 38 years placed in a position analogous to that of the Levites in the desert.

THE WAR AGAINST MIDIAN (Chap. xxii.).

42. The 22nd chapter of the Bishop's work, involves several objections, partly moral, and partly arithmetical. We shall now consider the latter. These objections are—I. How is it possible that 12,000 Israelites should have slain all the males of the Midianites, taken captive *all* the females and children, seized *all* their cattle and flocks, and *all* their goods, and burned *all* their cities and castles, without the loss of a single man, as related in Numb. xxxi.? II. Is it conceivable that these 12,000 men should have been able, in addition to killing every male, to carry off 100,000 captives, and drive before them 808,000, head of cattle? III. Can it be believed that the events, as enumerated further on, should have occurred in the short space of time which intervened between the death

of Aaron, on the first day of the fifth month of the fortieth year of Israel's wanderings (Num. xxxiii. 38), and the death of Moses, at the end of the fortieth year? These events are: the attack on the Canaanites (ibid. xxi. 1—3); the journey from Mount Hor (ibid. xxi. 5—9); the nine other encampments (ibid. xxi. 10—20); the war with Sihon (ibid. xxi. 21—25); the taking of the villages of Jaazer (ibid. xxi. 32); the conquest of Bashan (ibid. xxi. 33—35); the march to the plains of Moab (ibid. xxii. 1); the episode with Balak and Balaam (ibid. xxii.—xxiv.); Israel's abiding in Shittim (ibid. xxvi. 1—3); the plague (ibid. xxv. 9); the second census (ibid. xxv. 1); and, lastly, the war against Midian.

43. There can be no doubt that 12,000 Israelites were ordered to march against the Midianites; and we do not doubt but that these were picked men, especially trained for war, and well armed. But we are not equally sure that no more than 12,000 formed the expedition; that they were not joined by volunteers; and that they were accompanied by no attendants, and had no camp-followers. At all events, while there is nothing in the text of this narrative requiring this restriction, there occur expressions in it which seem to favour a different opinion. True, in the phrase, "Of every tribe a thousand, throughout all the tribes of Israel, shall ye send *to the host*" (**אֶחָד**, ver. 4) "host," if it had only occurred here, might have been considered as synonymous with *war*; but this cannot be the case in verse 14, for there we read that Moses was wroth with the officers "that came from the host of the war" (**מִצְבָּא הַמְּלָחֶמֶת**), and where **אֶחָד** (host) is clearly distinguished from **מְלָחֶמֶת** (war). The same distinction is also made in verses 27 and 28. Read by this light, verse 4 seems to mean that a thousand men of each tribe were sent to the host or army of which they were the principal, although not the exclusive, constituent party. It is, therefore, extraordinary, but not quite so incredible, that in this foray (as such Scripture

describes it) none of the 12,000 well-trained and armed warriors should have fallen, although some attendants or camp-followers, not equally well trained and equipped, may have been killed. At least, the report of the officers to Moses, in which they state this extraordinary fact, only refers to these; for they say, “Thy servants have taken the sum of the men of war *who are under our charge*, and there lacketh not one man of us.” Nay, construing the sentence strictly to the letter, the phrase, “who are under our charge,” seems to imply, that there were men in the expedition who were not under their charge like the 12,000, and about whose fate they were silent. We have, in our own days, heard of an analogous event. When two years ago Fort Sumter, in Charleston, South Carolina, was bombarded by the State troops for nearly a whole day, and the garrison at last compelled to evacuate the place, not a single casualty, either to the besiegers, from the fire of the besieged, nor to the besieged from that of the besiegers, marked the encounter; yet nobody, for this reason, doubted the historical character of the account.

44. This construction of verse 4 seems also to help us out of the Bishop’s second difficulty. If 12,000 men were not sufficient to bring to the camp the large number of captives and of beasts, the fair inference is, not that the account is unhistorical, but that the expedition consisted of a larger number of persons than that named, or that these were joined, after the defeat of the Midianites, by as many persons from the neighbouring camp as were necessary for the transport of the booty. By this time we have learned to estimate, by its true value, the usual objection of the Bishop to any rational explanation of a difficulty, by averring that nothing of the kind is stated in the text. We need not, therefore, be deterred from having recourse to the explanation given.

45. More formidable looks the third objection; but it only looks so when considered at a distance. When examined more

closely it recedes like mist, and we soon see there is no substance in it. To show what we mean, let us suppose that some historian, inattentive to dates, should have described the events marking the hundred days which elapsed between the landing of Napoleon I. at Cannes, after his withdrawal from Elba, and the battle of Waterloo, which brought his second reign to a close. On seeing the number of marches performed from the south of France, beyond the extreme north into the heart of Belgium; the concentration of large armies, the convocation of new Chambers, the promulgation of a new constitution, the large number of orders given; and finally, the movements which terminated in the overthrow at Waterloo — would the reader of this narrative not be tempted to declare, that it was impossible that so many events should have occurred within less than four months? Yet we know that the narrative is strictly true, and that an inquiry into these dates, and especially the pointing out of the events which happened simultaneously, although not thus represented in the account, would fully explain what, without this help, would appear a fiction.

46. Now this is precisely our position in reference to the events which the Bishop declared could not have occurred within seven months. The dates are omitted in the narrative, nor are we informed which events took place simultaneously. But this omission justifies as little the conclusion, that the events under discussion could not have occurred by reason of the shortness of the period within which they are described to have taken place, as it would be to argue that the events of the hundred days are a fiction. If we further consider that Moses knew that he had only a few months to live, we can easily imagine that he so made his arrangements as to be enabled to bring his allotted task to a close in due time, and not to leave any portion of his work unachieved. All we have, therefore, to do is to group the events so as to show that they might have occurred within the last seven months of the life of Moses.

47. Now, before we make this attempt, let us remind our readers that the theatre of these events was a comparatively small one—Mount Seir, Midian, Moab, and the two small kingdoms beyond the Jordan then ruled by Sihon and Og respectively—in size not exceeding a few English counties, and that a few hours' march from Israel's camp might have brought a body of picked soldiers within any of these territories. We now hypothetically begin our arrangement of dates. The attack of the Israelites on the Canaanite King Arad (Numb. xxi. 1—3), although recorded after the death of Aaron, may have taken place before his demise. Similar transpositions are not rare in the Pentateuch (G. G. 79). The march from Mount Hor, the murmuring of the people, and their punishment by means of burning serpents (Numb. 4—10), need only have occupied a few days. The nine places enumerated, in which the Israelites are said to have been encamped (*ibid.* 10—20), may only have been so many stations in which they halted for a short time to rest themselves. And even if the mass of the people had journeyed on slowly, detachments of soldiers might have pushed on and arrived at the boundaries of Sihon's kingdom long before the rest of the people. The embassy to this king, his overthrow, and the conquest of Jaazer (*ibid.* 21—32) may have taken place while the encumbered multitude, under the protection of a sufficient number of able-bodied men, marched along to join their brethren. Surely the presence of the women, children, old and infirm men, and of the people's flocks and herds, was not necessary for the achievement of the victories obtained by bodies of picked men charged with these expeditions. The kingdoms of Sihon and Og might have been overrun in a few days, and the fenced cities with which they were filled did not offer any obstacle to the progress of the conquest, as we nowhere find that they were defended. On the contrary, to judge from the terror with which the approach of the Israelites inspired these nations (*ibid.* xxii. 23; *Joshua* ii. 9),

we are justified in concluding that the moment the opposing armies were defeated in the field all further resistance ceased. The conquest of these two small territories might have been accomplished in less than a month; perhaps in less than a fortnight. The measures devised by Balak for the destruction of Israel (*ibid.* xxii. 5 — 26) might have been adopted the moment he heard that Israel intended to direct their march towards his territory, and Balaam might have arrived just after the people had reached the plains of Moab. A fortnight was, again, sufficient for the events narrated in chapters xxiii., xxiv., and in the first nine verses of chapter xxv. As the census recorded in chapter xxvi. might have been taken simultaneously in all tribes, every chief of the family declaring before the prince of his tribe the number of males of 20 and upwards under him, it might have been accomplished in one week. For the attack on the Midianites one week was sufficient. There, therefore, remained ample time for the address of Moses to the people, and, in fact, for all the events that marked the closing scene of his life, as described in Deuteronomy.

48. But, suppose it would have been impossible to frame a hypothesis showing that these events might have happened within seven months, would it be a fair inference that the narrative must necessarily be unhistorical, simply because we lack the knowledge of some details that might help us out of our difficulty? Certainly not. We should rather have reasoned thus: Had the author of Numbers written fiction instead of history, he would have taken care not to crowd these events within seven months, in order not to rouse any suspicion of their truthfulness. He might just as well have placed the death of Aaron in the first as in the fifth month of the fortieth year, and thus every suspicion might have been avoided. But as he wrote history, and not fiction, he could not place the date differently from what he did, because it was in the fifth, and not the first month that Aaron died. Thus the very circum-

stances which lead the Bishop to the conclusion that the events on which he comments are unhistorical, are to us on the contrary a strong evidence of their historical character.

IV.

GROUP OF MORAL OBJECTIONS.

1. Before we formulate this group of objections into distinct propositions, it will be necessary to premise a few general remarks.

2. In order to be able to judge of the ethical value of the Mosaic code, we must carefully distinguish between the broad and comprehensive moral principles enunciated by the Divine lawgiver, which formed a kind of ideal to be aspired after, or rather the theory, and the actual enactments naturally bearing the stamp of the institutions of the period and the necessities of the moment, and which constituted the practice. These two sets of ideas, as is characteristic of the sacred historian, and as marking the Pentateuch throughout, to which western notions of method and logical arrangements are strange, intermingle, and very often intertwine each other. The operation of separation is left to the biblical student, and not rarely can this only be effected by a process of subtle reasoning. These general principles are so comprehensive in their extent, and so sublime in their tendency, that they have, ever since their promulgation, been unapproached in their excellency. Take, for instance, the relation between God and man, as pointed out by this lawgiver. It is that between parent and children (Deut. xiv. 1). Love to God is designated as the fountain-head whence man's duties flow (Deut. vi. 5—8). Take, for instance, in civil laws, the glorious principle to which scarcely any nation, modern or ancient, has as yet raised itself—"One law

and one judgment shall be for you and the stranger who sojourns among you" (Numb. xv. 15, 16). Then, again, look at the criminal law. Not a single torture is sanctioned to obtain a confession from the accused. At the evidence only of not less than two witnesses could the accused be condemned, and even flogging, so universal in the East and among half-civilised nations, could not be resorted to in order to extort a confession; and when stripes were inflicted *as a punishment* after the crime was proved, the number of lashes was fixed, which must not be exceeded, "that thy brother shall not be slighted in thine eyes" (Deut. xxv. 3). It is scarcely necessary to point out instances of enactments bearing the stamp of the institutions of the time, as the memory of every reader of the Bible will easily supply them, and as we shall presently have to refer to them. The question now arises, Do the Bishop's objections, on moral grounds, to the historical character of the Pentateuch refer to the general principles of morality enunciated in the Books of Moses, or to special enactments marked by the characteristics pointed out? We answer, unhesitatingly, to the latter, as will be seen, when they shall have been formulated into distinct propositions, and duly examined.

3. These objections may be reduced to two propositions. The first is the supposed sanction given by God to slavery, as implied by Exod. xxi. 20, 21 (P. G. 45), where laws concerning slavery are given, and Numb. xxxi. 40, where we read of "Jehovah's tribute" of slaves. The second is the massacre of all the women and male children of the Midianites, by command of Moses (ver. 35). We will now discuss the first proposition.

4. We admit at once that slavery, in the widest sense of the word, is a most heinous offence against the law of nature, since man can have no right of property in man, all men being alike created in the image of God, and possessed of immortal souls. From this it necessarily follows, that, should Moses have sanctioned slavery, he would have violated a sacred

law of nature, and thus placed himself in opposition to the God of nature. But where has Moses sanctioned slavery? He nowhere in distinct words either approves of it or condemns it. Moses' presumed sanction of slavery is simply an inference which the Bishop draws from the circumstance that he enacted laws concerning it, and assigned to Eleazar certain slaves who formed the tribute of the Lord. Now against this inference we must be allowed to array others leading to a quite different conclusion; and we shall then leave it to our readers to judge which of the two sets of inferences is better founded, as disclosing the lawgiver's sentiments on the subject.

5. Had Moses sanctioned slavery, he must necessarily have admitted the right of property of man in man, and he consequently could not have enacted any laws in direct opposition to this right. Now what enactments do we find among his slave laws? The denial of the right of a Hebrew to possess a Hebrew slave. A Hebrew might sell himself to another Hebrew, but only for a period not exceeding six years at the utmost, and at the option of the slave, not of the master, until the jubilee (Ex. xxi. 2)—which, in reality, is not slavery, but only a contract into which a servant of his own free-will entered with an employer for a time, which could not exceed the legally fixed period. But it will be answered, that this was between Hebrew and Hebrew, and not between Hebrew and Gentile. Well, then, let us proceed to the consideration of another law affecting Gentile slaves. Should a Gentile slave from a foreign country take refuge in the land of the Israelites, the lawgiver forbids to deliver him up to his master (Deut. xxiii. 16, 17). Now on what ground could this protection to the fugitive slave be justified? Had a sheep or a bull escaped from the hand of a foreign butcher, and fled into the land of Israel, would the law have justified the refusal to restore it to its owner? Besides the general command, "Thou shalt not steal," there are special laws enjoining the restoration of any straying beast to its owner

(Ex. xxiii. 4) Moses, therefore, evidently made a distinction between the chattel called a slave and that named a sheep. He, therefore, could not have placed both on a par, so far as the right of property was concerned. He might have tolerated slavery as the minor evil, but evidently did not believe that man could possess an inalienable right in man. The supposed sanction, therefore, given by Moses to slavery, could only have consisted in his acquiescence in an institution which he found was then general, and which, under the circumstances then prevailing, he could not have abolished without introducing a still greater evil than that constituted by slavery. If, therefore, the abolition of slavery in the time of Moses was impracticable, nothing remained but to regulate the relations between master and slave, giving the latter the necessary legal protection against any abuse of the power of the former, and preparing the way for its ultimate extinction in due time.

6. That the abolition of slavery in the time of Moses must have been attended by evils far greater than slavery itself, will appear from the following considerations:— We can only imagine three sources of slavery in those primeval times—judicial slavery, the consequence of the sentence of a court which condemned a thief to be sold as a slave, in order to compensate the sufferer for the loss sustained; voluntary slavery, when an individual, in order to escape from some calamity, surrendered the liberty of his own free-will; and, lastly, forcible slavery, when the stronger reduced the weaker into bondage. Now of the first source of slavery we need not speak. It exists in our own days only in a different form. When a judge condemns a criminal to penal servitude for a certain period, or for life, the convict has become actually a slave—not of an individual, it is true, but of the state—not for the benefit of the sufferer, but to the injury of the country, which has to support him. But, for all that, he is a slave. We can, therefore, dismiss this source at once. Of the second

sourcee we have a striking exemplification in the fate of the Egyptians during the seven years of famine in the time of Joseph. When they had sold all their possessions in order to buy bread, they at last, in order to escape death, offered to sell their own persons to Pharaoh for food (Gen. xlvi. 19). It is evident, that in times of scarcity in those days such transactions must have been of frequent occurrence; for intercourse between nation and nation—nay, between neighbouring tribes—must have been rendered difficult, and therefore unfrequent, by the absence of good roads, travelling conveniences, and by the danger of travelling in general. Trade was in its infancy, and could not have extended to bulky commodities. The exchange of the superfluities of one country for those of another could only have been effected very slowly, even if its advantages had been universally acknowledged. It was much more difficult for a commodity to be transported to the persons who required it than for these to go to the place where the commodity was. When, therefore, a famine arose, men were generally helpless, as it was no easy matter to bring to them the abundance of another more fortunate country. And as there existed no poor law, which obliged those whose crops had not failed to support the destitute; and as the religions of those days neither appealed to man's charitable feelings nor cultivated them—those blessed with plenty had no motive whatever to support the needy with their stores. The only means of inducing the rich to do so was an appeal to their interest. By undertaking the obligation of working for them—*i.e.*, of selling themselves as slaves—the poor might induce the rich to support those who, without this help, must have perished.

7. Now as Moses, among his own people, had made a provision for the poor—in other words, had enacted what we should call a poor-law (Lev. xix. 9, 10; xxv. 35—38; and in many other places)—and, further, had enjoined charity to the

poor as one of the most important and sacred duties, he could with safety abolish slavery among the Israelites for Israelites. But as there existed no such provision among the neighbouring nations, the consequence would have been that, in case of famine in their own country and of plenty in the land of Israel, the destitute would have poured into the latter. The Israelites would then have been in this position — they must either support these destitute foreigners in common with their own poor, and thus run the risk of not having sufficient food for either, and after some time themselves suffer from want, or refuse all help to these strangers, and thus allow them to perish. It was clearly a minor evil, according to the notions of the age, to allow these strangers to sell themselves to the Israelites for bread, and, by working for and with their masters, to produce the staff of life. It is clear the remedy against the evil did not lie with the Israelites, but with the neighbouring nations. The moment they imitated the institutions of Israel, and provided for their poor, the source of voluntary slavery was stopped up.

8. The third source of slavery is exemplified by the fate of Joseph, who was sold by his brethren, and also by that of the Gibeonites, who, as though they had been prisoners of war, were condemned to slavery (Josh. ix. 2, 3). Indeed, the reduction of prisoners of war into bondage was then a great and moral progress; for what were the belligerent powers to do with their captives? International law, defining what an enemy might or might not do, was totally unknown. The exchange of prisoners was likewise unknown. The permanent subjection of a conquered people by means of garrisons, presupposed an organisation among the victors then possessed only by a few nations. Therefore, to ensure themselves the undisturbed possession of the conquered land, they deemed it most expedient to destroy all that might again dispute with them the possession of the conquest. The extermination of the

male population in a conquered district was, therefore, not an uncommon practice in those primeval times, and even at a much later period. When, therefore, the idea suggested itself to the victors, of carrying away the prisoners from their country, and making them work as slaves for their masters, it was greatly encouraged by all the philanthropists of the age, as these captives were thus rescued from death. As an attempt at forbidding the reduction of prisoners of war into slavery would only have been likely to revive the still more barbarous practice of massacring them, all that was practicable at the time was, in the first place, to render impossible, so far as Jews were concerned, an attack on a foreign nation for the sole purpose of obtaining slaves, as some African chiefs, if we are to believe the accounts of travellers, do to this day; and, secondly, to prevent labour by slaves becoming more profitable than that of persons working for wages. Upon the attainment of these two objects, the ultimate extinction of slavery, as a social institution, principally depended. And these two objects were fully attained, in the first place, by the law which enjoined on the Israelites to offer terms of peace to any city which they were going to attack, previous to laying siege to it (Deut. xx. 10). A sudden invasion of any territory by Israelites was, therefore, quite impossible, and with it there existed no chance of a cheap victory, consequently no inducement for such an attack. And, secondly, by the law which secured for the slave rest on the sabbath, the same as to his master; and further, by the law which deprived the master of the power of extorting by violence from the slave an extra amount of work; for if he only injured any of the limbs of his slave — for instance, knocked out one of his teeth — the slave instantly became free (Exod. xxi. 26, 27). It is evident that, without the stimulus of wages, and without the fear of violence, and working only six days in the week, the same as the hired servant, the latter, as daily experience teaches, beat

the former in the competition. Whenever, therefore, the maintenance of a slave equalled in expense the wages of a free labourer, it was clearly to the interest of the employer to make use of the services of the latter in preference to the work of the former. Thus we see, that these very humane laws, which gave such very efficient protection to the slave, whilst drying up the sources whence slavery was replenished, also served to pave the way for its extinction. The Bishop's statement, therefore, that Moses gave his—that is, Divine—sanction to slavery, is altogether unfounded.

9. The remarks made on the objection just disposed of, will assist us in the removal of the second. If slavery was an institution rather acquiesced in than sanctioned, and only tolerated as a minor evil, the proceedings against the Midianites, upon which the Bishop so harshly comments, were the unavoidable consequences of a stern necessity, imposed by the institutions and practices of the age, of the peculiar position in which Moses had been placed by the Midianites themselves, and of the high mission with which he was charged. Once grant the necessity of the expedition against Midian, and it must be admitted that every subsequent measure adopted was a consequence that might be deplored, but could hardly have been avoided. That this expedition was deliberately forced upon Moses by the Midianites, will appear from the following considerations.

10. The Midianites were on amicable terms with the Israelites encamped at Shittim. Israelitish men visited the abodes of the Midianites, and Midianitish women visited the camp of Israel. Amidst these apparently friendly relations, sincere in so far as the Israelites were concerned, the Midianites conspired against their confiding neighbours. The moral, if not the physical, destruction of the Israelites was their aim, and their women became the principal agents in the dark plot. They enticed the Israelites not as voluptuaries, for the gratification of sensuality, not even as harlots, for the wages of sin; but as

Delilahs, to make use of the influence acquired over their victims as atrocious means towards a still more atrocious object. The Israelites were to be seduced from the allegiance they owed to the only God, and to be led back to idolatry (Numb. xxv. 16—18). These Midianites knew well what they staked; they knew that their success meant rebellion against God, and their failure vengeance on their head. They knew that if they failed to turn the people from Moses and his law, the outraged law could not allow the crime to remain unpunished. Although they brought a great calamity upon the people (xxv. 8, 9), yet they failed in their chief attempt. It was now for the Divine lawgiver to show his people, by the severity with which the abettors to the crime were to be punished, the horror in which they were to hold the crime committed. It was now for him to avenge the dark treachery of the Midianites, the insult offered to all laws of God and man, and, by the punishment inflicted, to deter other tribes from pursuing a similar course. At the command of God the expedition against Midian was undertaken. The men were slain in an open fair fight, and we need not construe the words of the narrative in the Pentateuch so strictly to the letter, as to suppose that all the men of Midian were killed, since we find, at a subsequent period, the tribe of the Midianites still in existence and flourishing (Judges vi.). When the expedition returned, accompanied by the captive women and children of the vanquished people, Moses was placed in a peculiar position. These women were the chief criminals, as the Divine lawgiver expressed himself (Numb. xxxi. 16): “Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the Eternal in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the Eternal;” which in the original is expressed with still greater force by the words, **הַנָּה הִזְלַבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל**. Had they been allowed to escape with impunity, the principal object of the expedition would

have failed; but had they been sent back to their homes, this, according to the notions of the age and the institutions of the time, would have been impunity. Nor could they have been kept in the camp; not as prisoners, because there neither existed prisons, warders, or any other machinery for the custody and support of such a large multitude; nor as slaves, because they would have been sure to re-establish their influence over the men whom they had led astray before, and would, in the midst of the camp, as the concubines of their masters, have continued to alienate them from the God of Israel. Their destruction became as advisable, as a matter of precaution, as it was justifiable by their crime.

11. The fate of the children, too, required consideration. The females among them might, without danger to the people, be preserved alive. They were young, and their idolatrous habits not deeply rooted. When grown up, they would become the wives, or concubines, of their masters, and as such would more and more become identified with the feelings and interests of their husbands and children. The female children, accordingly, were kept alive. It was different with the males. According to the institutions then prevailing, and we believe still obtaining in many parts of Arabia, every one of these boys, when grown up, must have become *an avenger of blood* (Num. xxxv. 19, 2 Sam. xiv. 7—11). The duty would have devolved upon him to slay those that slew his parents, regardless of the crime which led to their destruction. No device that might have been contrived by the people could have averted this danger from them. If restored to their homes, they would have united with the survivors, and disturbed the peace of the Israelites by their attacks; and if kept as slaves in the camp, frequent assassinations and riots would in time have been the consequence. On this subject, we refer our readers to Michaelis's "*Mosaisches Recht*," vol. ii. par. 131—137, where the extent, stringency, and terrible consequences of this insti-

tution are fully described. The safety of the people being the highest law, stern necessity seemed to bid the destruction of these future avengers of blood. We may deplore their fate; and the rationalist who cannot perceive in this act the hand of an Omniscient God, foreseeing the incompatibility of their preservation with the discharge of Israel's mission, may even impute to Moses an error in judgment; but he has certainly no right, as the Bishop has done, to compare these executions with the massacre at Cawnpore. The women and children whose massacre was ordered by Nana Sahib had not in any way participated in what he considered the offences of their husbands and fathers. The preservation of these women and children could not in any way have interfered with his plans. Moreover, in this matter Nana Sahib was the traitor. The English had surrendered to him on the faith of their being allowed to depart. His crimes were as atrocious as they were unnecessary. But in the case of the Midianites, it was they who had acted the part of traitors to the Israelites, and it was their women who were the chief criminals. Innocence therefore cannot be pleaded for them as for the massacred English women at Cawnpore; and of the children of the Midianites, those were kept alive, whose preservation was not likely to endanger the safety of the people, while at Cawnpore all children were indiscriminately involved in the fate of their parents. The believer in the historical character of the Bible, therefore, may consider the narrative contained in Numb. xxxi. as true, without any necessity for placing Moses on a par with the wretched Hindoo, as implied by the Bishop's comparison.

12. We have now brought our examination to a close, and must leave it to our readers to decide whether the Bishop has succeeded in establishing the position with which he set out—that the Pentateuch is mainly unhistorical.

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